

ACQUISITION WORKFORCE, TRAINING, DELEGATION,
AND TRACKING SYSTEMS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION		NUMBER: DR 5001-001
SUBJECT: Acquisition Workforce Training, Delegation, and Tracking Systems	DATE: September 21, 2000	
	OPI: Office of Procurement, Property and Emergency Preparedness	

1 PURPOSE

This Regulation establishes the following procedures for the USDA Acquisition Workforce Career Management Program:

a Procedures for effective career development pursuant to OFPP Policy Letter No.

92-3, OFPP Policy Letter No. 97-01, and other Government wide guidelines for fostering and promoting a professional Acquisition Workforce.

b Departmental procedures for the selection, appointment, and termination of appointment of Contracting Officers as required by Section 1.603 of the FAR and Section 401.603 of the AGAR.

2 CANCELLATION

This Regulation cancels and revises DR 5001-1, "*Competency Based Contracting Officer Warrant System*" dated November 16, 1994.

3 POLICY

Contracting Activities shall provide Acquisition Workforce personnel competency-based training. On behalf of the SPE, each HCA is responsible for enhancing the development of a professional workforce by assuring compliance with mandatory

acquisition training and experience standards as outlined in this Regulation.

4 BACKGROUND

During the past 25 years, every major study of the Federal acquisition process has recommended improvements in the management of the Acquisition Workforce. The Acquisition Workforce is responsible for purchasing billions of dollars in goods and services for the Government every year. A highly skilled Acquisition Workforce is a critical element in obtaining effective procurement support of mission delivery. Consequently, in 1996 Congress passed the Clinger-Cohen Act (Act), Pub. L. 104-106, to establish education, training and experience requirements for civilian agencies that are comparable to the DAWIA for the Department of Defense. This Regulation implements that Act and OFPP Policy Letter No. 97-01.

5 ABBREVIATIONS

AWTS Acquisition Workforce Tracking System

AGAR Agriculture Acquisition Regulation

CMPO Career Management Program Office

CO Contracting Officer

COR Contracting Officer Representative

COTR Contracting Officer Technical Representative

DAWIA Defense Authorization Work Improvement Act

DOD Department of Defense

DR Departmental Regulation

EO Executive Order

FAR Federal Acquisition Regulation

FAI Federal Acquisition Institute

FPDS Federal Procurement Data System

FSS Federal Supply Schedule

GS General Schedule

GSA General Services Administration

HCA Head of the Contracting Activity

HCAD Head of the Contracting Activity Designee

IDP Individual Development Plan

IT Information Technology

NCMA National Contract Management Association

OFPP Office of Federal Procurement Policy (Office of Management and Budget)

OJT On the Job Training

OO Office of Operations

OPPEP Office of Procurement, Property and Emergency Preparedness

PPD Procurement Policy Division

SPE Senior Procurement Executive

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

6 DEFINITIONS

a Acquisition Workforce. The personnel component of the Federal acquisition system. The Acquisition Workforce includes employees in the GS-1102 series,

GS-1105 series, Head of Contracting Activity Designees, Contracting Officers, CORs/COTRs or equivalent, and other positions as designated by the SPE.

b Acquisition Workforce Coordinator. An employee who is responsible for an agency's Career Management Program or manages an agency's Acquisition Workforce.

c Appointing Official. A person authorized to confer individual warrant authority (issue a Contracting Officer warrant) consistent with the applicable requirements of the FAR, AGAR, and this Regulation.

d Career Management Program Office. The office within OPPEP responsible for enhancing acquisition workforce career management by developing, implementing, and evaluating USDA training policies pursuant to Executive Order No. 12931, OFPP Policy Letter No. 92-3, and OFPP Policy Letter No. 97-01.

e Certification. An assurance that an employee has the experience, education and training plus subjective factors such as business acumen, judgment, character, reputation and ethics to perform selected duties.

f Competency-based Training. Training in contract duties that provide employees an opportunity to develop and demonstrate an appropriate level of skill, given the characteristics of the agency's overall mission.

g Contract. See Definition in FAR 2.101. A mutually binding legal agreement signed by a Contracting Officer that obligates the Government to an expenditure of funds, despite the character of the funding (e.g., appropriated versus non-appropriated). It includes commitments and awards; notices of awards; job orders or task letters issued under basic ordering agreements; Economy Act purchases pursuant to interagency agreements with other Federal agencies or USDA agencies; letter contracts; orders, such as purchase orders for any amount, under which the contract becomes effective by written acceptance or performance; and bilateral contract modifications. Contracts do not include grants or agreements covered by 31 U.S.C. 6301, et seq.

h Contract Specialist. Designated individuals in the GS-1102 series.

i Contracting Activity. A USDA organization that has received a written Departmental delegation from the SPE establishing a contracting

activity's authority and responsibility to manage its contract function and those of other organizations for which it provides administrative support.

j Contracting Officer (CO). A person delegated authority to (1) enter, administer, and terminate contracts in accordance with Federal acquisition laws and regulations, and (2) make related determinations and findings.

k Contracting Officer Representative (COR). Also referred to as Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR). A person designated by the Contracting Officer to assist in the technical monitoring or administration of a contract. Procedures vary from agency to agency, but generally a COR must be designated in writing with a copy furnished the contractor. The designation does not include any authority to make any commitments or changes that affect price, quality, quantity, delivery, or other terms and conditions of the contract. For purposes of this Regulation, we will use the term CORs for COTRs and CORs.

l Contracting Officer Technical Representatives (COTR). See Contracting Officer Representative.

m Contracting Officer Warrant Authority. Authority delegated to a Level I through III Contracting Officer to bind the Government.

n Equivalent Course. A course used as a substitute for one or more of the courses in the Individual Development Plan.

o Federal Supply Schedule (FSS). Indefinite delivery contracts, including requirements contracts, awarded by the General Services Administration (GSA), using competitive procedures to provide supplies and services at stated prices for given periods.

p Head of the Agency or Agency Head. The Secretary of Agriculture, Deputy Secretary, or the Assistant Secretary for Administration.

q Head of the Contracting Activity (HCA). The official delegated broad authority by the SPE to manage the contracting activity. Unless stated otherwise, the HCA may designate, on a non-delegable basis, an individual (not a position), to act as the HCA.

r Head of the Contracting Activity Designee (HCAD). The individual (not a position) designated by the HCA to carry out the functions of the HCA. This individual must meet the requirements of DR 5001-1 and be no lower in the organization than the Director of Administrative Services or an equivalent position.

s Individual Development Plan (IDP). A Government wide plan that prescribes courses and related on-the-job units of instruction. Employees use the plan to annotate their training schedule and to document the completion of formal and on-the-job training.

t On-the-Job Training (OJT) Unit of Instruction. A duty that an Acquisition Workforce member shall demonstrate as a prerequisite for certification. Acquisition Workforce members attain competency through completion of course work and on-the-job training related to that duty or as otherwise provided in this Regulation.

u Practicum. Self instructional exercises (including “school solutions” for evaluators) that can be used instead of an actual work assignment to provide employees an opportunity to practice performance of a duty represented by an OJT Unit of Instruction.

v Procurement System. The integration of the procurement process, the professional development of the Acquisition Workforce, and the management structure for carrying out the procurement function.

w Program Manager. The person responsible for program plans, funding, schedules, and timely completion within cost limitations. Planning responsibilities include developing acquisition strategies and promoting full and open competition.

x Senior Procurement Executive (SPE). The Agency official appointed by the Head of the Agency pursuant to Executive Order No.12931 and the OFPP Act, 41 U.S.C. 414. Through a delegation to the Assistant Secretary for Administration, the Secretary has designated the Director, Office of Procurement, Property, and

Emergency Preparedness, to serve as the SPE. This individual has agency-wide responsibility for:

- (1) Managing USDA's contract activities,
- (2) Overseeing the development of procurement systems,
- (3) Evaluating system performance in accordance with approved criteria,
- (4) Enhancing career management of the Acquisition Workforce, and
- (5) Certifying to the Secretary that procurement systems meet approved criteria.

y Simplified Acquisition Procedures. The methods prescribed in FAR Part 13 for making purchases of supplies or services up to \$100,000.

z Unauthorized Commitments. Commitments made without authority to bind the Government.

aa Warrant. The document, SF-1402, which describes a Contracting Officer appointment including limitations.

7 APPLICABILITY

The FAR guidance contained herein shall apply to the following USDA personnel:

- a Contracting Officers regardless of General Schedule series;
- b All positions in the GS-1102 Contracting series;
- c All positions in the GS-1105 Purchasing Series;
- d Contracting Officer Representatives/Contracting Officer Technical Representatives or equivalent positions;
- e Heads of Contracting Activity Designees; and
- f Any other position determined by the SPE to be an Acquisition Workforce position.

8 ACQUISITION WORKFORCE TRAINING

One goal for USDA's Acquisition Workforce training program is to provide employees quality training that is consistent from one USDA agency to another and from one Federal agency to another. To ensure a quality workforce, each Acquisition Workforce member will be responsible for:

- a Demonstrating the competence to meet all applicable educational requirements;
- b Completing the mandatory procurement training curriculum; and
- c Demonstrating the ability to reinforce learned skills and knowledge through on-the-job work assignments, rotational assignments, or practicums.

9 EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Appendix C, *Qualification Standard for GS-1102 Personnel*, outlines educational requirements for contract specialists. Educational requirements for COR/COTRs and HCAs fall within the purview of their job series and are not Acquisition Workforce requirements. It is recommend that GS-1105 employees meet the educational requirement outlined in Appendix D.

10 MANDATORY PROCUREMENT TRAINING

OFPP prescribed a core procurement training curriculum covering the full range of competencies to which agencies should train Contract Specialists (GS-1102) and Contracting Officers, regardless of series. This mandatory core training curriculum can be found in Appendices D and E. Table 3 lists minimum procurement training subject areas for COR/COTRs.

11 OJT UNITS OF INSTRUCTION

Contracting Officers, Contract Specialists, and CORs must complete the OJT units of instruction for each competency listed in FAI's Contract Specialist or COR Workbook, as applicable. When necessary, supervisors or Acquisition Workforce coordinators may schedule the following types of activities to complete OJT Units of Instruction:

- a Work Assignments. Assigning work that gives the employee an opportunity to practice the duty(ies) represented by the OJT Unit of Instruction.
- b Rotational Assignments. A means for completing an OJT unit of instruction that involves assigning an employee work from another contracting office. The rotational assignment provides the employee an opportunity to practice performance of one or more duties represented by the OJT Unit of Instruction from the employee's IDP. Rotational assignments can be for a period of one day and up to three months. Training periods should be of an appropriate duration to complete the training in the specified OJT Unit of Instruction. The supervisor assigning the work evaluates employees.
- c Practicums. When available, the CMPO will issue self-instructional exercises (including "school solutions" for evaluators) or recommend computerized exercises that can be used, instead of an actual work assignment. These exercises will give the employee an opportunity to practice performance of a duty represented by an OJT Unit of Instruction.
- d Other Developmental Activities. Contracting organizations may assign comparable activities since it provides the employee an opportunity to practice performance of the duty and related tasks from the OJT Unit of Instruction. Developmental activities should be coordinated with the CMPO before scheduling the instruction.
- e Waivers Based on Inability to Provide a Developmental Assignment. The HCA/HCAD may waive an OJT Unit of Instruction in the IDP when all of the following are true:

- (1) The employing Departmental agency does not perform the related duty at that locality.

- (2) Practicums for that OJT Unit of Instruction are currently not available and will not be available within six months after completion of the related IDP course.

- (3) The employing Departmental agency cannot provide a satisfactory developmental activity in that local commuting area.

12 MICRO-PURCHASE TRAINING FOR NONPROCUREMENT PERSONNEL

Unwarranted Micro-purchase card holders are not considered members of the Acquisition Workforce. USDA has issued numerous Government wide purchase cards to employees to reduce the issuance of administratively costly purchase orders for inexpensive goods and services up to the Micro-purchase threshold of \$2,500 (\$2,000 for construction). These Micro-purchase card holders are trained in the proper use of the card prior to obtaining a card. When authorized, purchase card holders may also write convenience checks.

13 TRAINING GS-1105 PERSONNEL

Personnel in the GS-1105 series are normally referred to as Purchasing Agents.

GS-1105 employees may be delegated authority to award and administer purchase card transactions and purchase orders for goods and services up to a maximum of \$100,000 (\$300,000 on delivery orders). At a minimum, agencies shall provide each GS-1105 employee an extensive *Simplified Acquisition Procedure* course.

Whether warranted or unwarranted, purchasing agents are responsible for knowing, understanding, and performing many of the same duties (competencies) as contract specialists. Therefore, supervisors should provide each Level IC (See Appendix D) purchasing agent with a copy of the *Contract Specialist Workbook* with the units of instructions (duties) associated with CON 101. The *Contract Specialist Workbook* can be found at <http://www.gsa.gov/staff/v/training.htm>.

Depending on job functions, basic GS-1105 training may include some or all of the following courses or equivalent:

Training Curriculum for GS-1105 Personnel

umberCourse TitleCourse Equivalents

Simplified Acquisition Procedures

Simplified Acquisition Procedures

Fundamentals of Contracting

Introduction to Contracting

Acquisition Planning I

Contract Administration I

Contract Formation

Table 1

14 OJT SKILL LEVELS AND UNITS OF INSTRUCTION FOR GS-1105 PERSONNEL

GS-1105 personnel or purchasing agents must attain a minimum skill level for each required course and its associated duties as listed on the IDP (Appendix K). Recommended duties and skill levels for purchasing agents are outlined in Appendix I. HCA/HCADs may modify skill levels, as needed, to reflect current job descriptions and agency missions.

15 TRAINING GS-1102 PERSONNEL

GS-1102 positions are generally referred to as Contract Specialists or Procurement Analysts. Both positions are considered professionals in the GS-1102 series. Whether warranted or unwarranted, GS-1102 personnel are responsible for knowing, understanding, and performing the duties outlined in Appendix H. Following is the mandatory procurement training curriculum (Table 2) reference in the GS-1102 qualification standard for GS-13 positions and above.

Training Curriculum for GS-1102 Personnel

Course NumberCourse TitleCourse Equivalents

None	Simplified Acquisition Procedures	Simplified Acquisition Procedures
CON 101	Fundamentals of Contracting	Introduction to Contracting
		Acquisition Planning I
		Contract Administration I
		Contract Formation
CON 104	Fundamentals of Contract Pricing	Price Analysis
		Cost Analysis
		Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques
CON 202	Intermediate Contracting	Acquisition Planning II
		Contract Formation II
		Contract Administration II
CON 204	Intermediate Contract Pricing	Intermediate Contract Pricing
CON 210	Government Contract Law	Government Contract Law
CON 301	Executive Contracting (optional)	Executive Seminar in Acquisition

Table 2

16 OJT SKILL LEVELS AND UNITS OF INSTRUCTION FOR GS-1102 PERSONNEL

GS-1102 personnel must attain an acceptable skill level for each OJT competency. Recommended skill levels for contract specialists/procurement analysts are outlined in Appendix H. HCA/HCADs may modify skill levels, as needed, to reflect current job descriptions and agency missions.

17 CONTRACT SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Upon completion of the following requirements, GS-1102 personnel will be noted in the AWTS as a certified Level I, Level II, or Level III Acquisition Professional. Program certification requirements are consistent with minimum classroom and OJT

requirements for Contracting Officers. Whether warranted or unwarranted and upon completion of the Level III training requirements, each GS-1102 employees will receive a certificate signed by the SPE (See Appendix N).

Level I Completion of a Simplified Acquisition Procedure course or equivalent

Level II Completion of Level I requirements, CON 101 or equivalent, CON 210 or equivalent, and CON 104 or equivalent.

Level III Completion of Level II requirements, CON 202 or equivalent, and CON 204 or equivalent.

18 CONTRACT SPECIALIST WORKBOOK

a Each Contract Specialist, supervisor, or Acquisition Workforce Coordinator shall have access to a copy of the "*Contract Specialist Workbook*." Workbooks can be downloaded from the FAI homepage at <http://www.gsa.gov/staff/v/training.htm>. The Workbook shall be used as a guide for:

- (1) Performing contract management duties;
- (2) Identifying and reporting training needs; and
- (3) Documenting the completion of course work and on-the-job training.

b The Workbook is an integral part of an employee's ability to learn and demonstrate competence. It includes a separate unit of instruction for each duty consisting of:

- (1) Instructional objectives for training the duty;
- (2) Relevant FAR references;
- (3) A flow chart of steps in performing the duty;
- (4) A step by step breakdown of the duty; and
- (5) Forms for planning and documenting training in the duty.

FAI has the responsibility for modifying the *Contract Specialist Workbook* to meet the needs of contracting personnel and making revisions as procurement regulations change.

19 GS-1102 AND GS-1105 INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

GS-1105 employees who are preparing for Level IC warrant authority and employees entering the GS-1102 series shall develop, in conjunction with their supervisor, an IDP that reflects necessary course work, training schedule, and related on-the-job units of instruction. The IDP should be prepared and approved on an annual basis, coinciding with the performance rating period. Employees enrolled in the program at mid-level or full performance grade levels must complete course work and OJT Units of Instruction in those areas where they lack skills.

Copies of the IDP can be found in the *Contract Specialist Workbook* and at Appendix K.

20 TRAINING CONTRACTING OFFICER REPRESENTATIVES

Employees designated as CORs (sometimes referred to as COTRs) must demonstrate an ability to perform selected pre award and post award administrative functions on behalf of the Contracting Officer. CORs can download a copy of FAI's *Contracting Officer Representative's Workbook* including the Governmentwide training curricula for CORs, at <http://www.gsa.gov/staff/v/training.htm>.

Designated CORs shall obtain training as outlined in Table 3. In lieu of formal classroom instruction, CORs may obtain training from the FAI's On-Line University at <http://www.gsa.gov/staff/v/training.htm>. The on-line course is free to all USDA employees. FAI estimates that it will take employees not familiar with the Federal Acquisition Process approximately 45 seat hours to complete the course. Level II and III CORs must meet both classroom and OJT requirements before certification. HCA/HCADs may modify OJT skill levels, as needed, to reflect current job descriptions and agency missions.

21 COR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Employees will be noted as certified Level I, II, or III CORs in the AWTS upon completion of the training requirements outlined in Table 3 and Appendix G. The CMPO will not issue COR certificates or certification letters. Agency contracting activities or program officers may provide these documents to CORs if they wish. The HCAD for the assigned Departmental agency shall provide COR certification information to the CMPO for input into the AWTS.

22 COR AUTHORITY

The Contracting Officer shall delegate limited COR authority, in writing, for the administration of various technical aspects of a contract. Authority to bind the government stays with the Contracting Officer.

On occasion, the HCA may delegate a COR Administrative Contracting Officer authority, (e.g., award modifications against the contracts, etc.) A COR who is also an ACO must meet the required education, training, and experience requirements necessary to issue a SF-1402 for the total amount of the contract.

COR/COTR and Program Manager Training Curriculum

Training shall include a discussion of the following duties (competencies) or equivalent:

Level I (Basic)	COR Course (Federal Acquisition Process)
Level II (Mid)	Preparation of a Purchase Request Package/Market Research (2A)
	Preparation & Review of Requirements (2C)
	Developing a COR Workplan (3)
	Post Award Orientation (4)
	Inspection and Acceptance (7)
	Payment
	Closeout
Level III (Advanced)	Property Administration/Government Furnished Property (6)

Property (2B)

Contract Modification (8)

Delays (9)

Stop Work (10)

Claims (11)

Remedies (12)

Terminations (13)

Monitor Compliance (5A)

Monitor Costs (5B)

Table 3 Training is cumulative. COR duty descriptions can be found in Appendix J.

23 COR TRAINING PLAN

Employees nominated to serve as Level II and III CORs must develop a training plan with their supervisor. The plan format, which can be found in Appendix K-2, shall document scheduled COR training, when needed, and completed COR training outlined in Table 3.

24 DETERMINING THE COR LEVEL FOR A CONTRACT

Contracting Officers and Program Managers shall determine when and if a COR is needed and the certification level necessary to administer a contract. The certification level should be determined by reviewing Appendix J, defining the complexity of the project, deciding what competencies apply to a project, and estimating the skill levels necessary to perform those duties. Contracting activities are authorized to mandate minimal training requirements (training in specific duties) for individuals performing isolated COR functions. The CMPO will track individuals with minimal COR training in the AWTS.

25 COMPLIANCE WITH COR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Employees presently working as designated CORs must meet the applicable certification requirements within six months from the issue date of this Regulation. Employees scheduled for designation as CORs must complete all training requirements within three months after assuming Level I COR duties; five months after assuming Level II COR duties; and six months after assuming Level III duties.

The HCA/HCAD, on a one-time, non-delegable basis, may waive the COR training requirements when procuring unusual and compelling urgency requirements. Waivers shall document why the designated individual(s) will not have an opportunity to obtain the necessary training.

26 MAINTENANCE TRAINING FOR ACQUISITION WORKFORCE MEMBERS

Contracting Officers and GS-1105/GS-1102 employees shall obtain at least 40 hours of continuing education or training every two years. Employees working as CORs must obtain 24 hours of training every two years to remain active participants in the AWTS certification program. Failure to meet the maintenance requirements may result in the termination of a Contracting Officer warrant, the termination of a COR certification, or an inability to meet the GS-1102 qualification standard. HCADs are encouraged to stay informed on current procurement issues.

Upon issuance of this Regulation, maintenance training dates for Acquisition Workforce members shall be computed on a calendar basis. Each maintenance period will commence on January 1 and end on December 31 of the following year. Acquisition Workforce coordinators and HCADs may establish maintenance periods for Acquisition Workforce members using any method that will assure consistent biennial training. It is recommended that employees presently warranted as Contracting Officers end their present maintenance period on December 31, two years from their last formal training. Once a new maintenance training period is established, the anniversary date shall not change, even when reemployed within USDA.

Maintenance training may include the study of new requirements, techniques, or procedures caused by changes in law, regulation, policy, reviews, or business research. In addition to attending Government wide training facilities, maintenance training may also

include nonmandatory classroom training, seminars, conferences, satellite downlinks, on-line courses, agency sponsored training, management/executive seminars, professional association related projects, participation in seminars, or any other training that enhances present acquisition job skills.

Each agency shall establish informal procedures to ensure that Acquisition Workforce personnel keep their training records current at the CMPO.

27 COMPETENCY-BASED TRAINING

Agencies may provide training from any qualified training source. Acquisition workforce personnel are not required to take courses that are specifically designated as competency-based courses. Until instructed otherwise, employees should review the course material before enrollment to assure that critical duties (competencies) are covered in the course.

28 TRAINING HEADS OF THE CONTRACTING ACTIVITY

a The HCAD shall obtain a minimum of 160 hours of basic contract training within one year after assuming responsibilities for the contracting activity. HCADs must accumulate 40 hours of maintenance training every two years. Listed below are some activities for accumulating training:

(1) Attend seminars to remain current with new contracting reforms;

(2) Attend courses via formal classroom training, satellite downlinks, on-line, etc.;

(3) Attend NCMA meetings and read contracting journals/articles; or

(4) Attend contract management courses.

b HCADs shall report their training accomplishments, including the number of hours, to OPPEP/PPD for input into the AWTS. Exceptions and requests for time extensions to the training requirement shall be addressed to the SPE.

29 DELEGATION OF WARRANT AUTHORITY

The SPE, HCA, HCAD, and employees delegated warrant authority are the only individuals legally authorized to bind the Government by executing contracts, as defined in this Regulation, and to sign determinations and findings required by FAR. Contracting Officer warrant authority shall be clearly stated, in writing, on a SF-1402, Certificate of Appointment.

Contracting Officers become personally responsible for each procurement document he or she signs, and cannot sign "for" or over the name of another Contracting Officer, or at a level exceeding the limitations stated on his or her individual warrant.

30 EXEMPTIONS FROM WARRANTING REQUIREMENTS

Personnel carrying out transactions or executing documents listed below are not covered by the Contracting Officer warranting requirements. Individuals should be duly authorized and instructed as to their responsibilities and limitations when obligating the Government using these procedures. Although the following transactions and documents are exempt by the FAR warranting requirements, a HCA/HCAD may require a warranted Contracting Officer to sign any or all of the listed procedures:

- a Imprest Fund Transactions [Agencies will designate specific individuals to approve imprest fund transactions until these types of transactions are totally replaced by the Purchase Card Management System and/or other substitute processes]
- b SF-182, Request, Authorization, Agreement, and Certification of Training
- c Government Bills of Lading
- d Leasing of Real Property [Individuals shall comply with DR 5100-2, Real Property Leasing Officer Warrant System]
- e Micro-purchase credit card transactions (authorized under DR 5013-6)
- f Cooperative agreements and grants

31 MAXIMUM WARRANT AUTHORITY FOR GS-1102 PERSONNEL

Appointing officials may grant up to an unlimited amount of warrant authority to GS-1102 personnel. The amount of authority granted shall be determined by the agency's needs, employee's education, procurement training, and experience. In addition to meeting the Office of Personnel Management's qualification standard for GS-1102 employees (see Appendix C), Contracting Officers must meet all general and specialized requirements outlined in Appendix E.

32 MAXIMUM WARRANT AUTHORITY FOR GS-1105 PERSONNEL

a GS-1105 personnel are authorized to use the simplified contract format for issuing:

(1) Purchase orders, including modifications, up to \$100,000;

(2) Delivery orders, including modifications, up to \$300,000; and

(3) Purchase orders and delivery orders, including modifications, for the award of IT, construction, and architect/engineering contract requirements. Orders over \$25,000 must be signed by a Level IC Contracting Officer with specialized training in that particular area.

b After issuance of this Regulation, personnel must meet all mandatory OJT and formal training requirements to receive delegated warrant authority. GS-1105 personnel who presently have Level IC warrant authority as defined in Appendix D must meet all general and specialized training and experience requirements within 18 months from the issue date of this Regulation. Failure to meet the requirements within the time frame shall result in the HCA either reducing or terminating the delegated warrant authority.

33 WARRANT AUTHORITY FOR NONPROCUREMENT PERSONNEL

Appointing officials may grant nonprocurement personnel warrant authority up to \$25,000 (Level IA or IB) for commercial supplies and services. Purchase order and delivery order authority, including orders for IT, may be authorized up to the delegated warrant authority for commercially priced supplied and services. Employees granted legal authority to bind the Government must comply with all Federal laws, rules, regulations, agency directives, FPDS reporting requirements, and other acquisition guidelines. Nonprocurement personnel who are appointed as Contracting Officers must meet all applicable general and specialized requirements outlined in Appendix D.

34 APPOINTING OFFICIALS FOR CONTRACTING OFFICERS

Unless authorized otherwise by the SPE in writing, the HCA and HCAD are the only appointing officials for Contracting Officers. The HCA or HCAD will determine if the appointment is consistent with applicable requirements of the AGAR, the FAR, and other delegations of authority.

35 CONTRACTING OFFICER APPOINTMENTS

Appointing officials must appoint Level I through III Contracting Officers in writing on a Certificate of Appointment (SF-1402). The certificate shall state the individual's name (not a position); limitations on the scope of warrant authority; and be displayed openly to the general public and agency personnel.

Appointing officials shall ensure that individuals nominated as Contracting Officers meet the minimum requirements of Appendix D and E. The CMPO, in coordination with the *Procurement Management Review* functions, shall periodically examine the qualifications and need for Contracting Officer appointments.

36 REQUIRED AMOUNT OF DELEGATED WARRANT AUTHORITY

Contracting Officers are authorized to sign contract actions up to their delegated warrant authority as specified on the SF-1402. Contracting Officers are also authorized to use Government wide purchase cards as a payment mechanism for contractual actions

over the Micro-purchase threshold and up to their delegated warrant authority after confirming the receipt of goods and services.

Contracting Officers are prohibited from signing actions, including modifications, options, estimated orders against an indefinite delivery contract, or any other situation, that will result in the total amount of the contract exceeding their delegated warrant authority. In some situations, higher level Contracting Officers must sign the action when amendments or modifications to orders and contracts make the total amount exceed the Contracting Officer's warrant limitation. Contracting Officers are not necessarily required to conduct or participate in every aspect of the contract personally. However, the Contracting Officer is responsible for assuring that the document is in compliance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

37 WARRANTING GS-1102 AND GS-1105 EMPLOYEES

Many procurement positions, such as procurement analysts, do not require that an individual be warranted. Employees shall be warranted when there is a valid organizational need for a Contracting Officer. Factors such as volume of actions, complexity of work, and organizational structure shall be major considerations when issuing warrants.

38 CONTRACTING OFFICER APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES

Once the need is determined, the supervisor or the workforce coordinator may nominate a Contracting Officer candidate at an appropriate level. The amount specified on the warrant should cover the estimated maximum contract amount, including all option periods. The candidate shall prepare a qualification statement similar to Appendix L-1, documenting all required qualifications. The supervisor or workforce coordinator must review the statement and prepare a request for appointment similar to Appendix M for each candidate nominated.

After receipt and a satisfactory review of the information outlined above, the appointing official shall sign and issue the certificate of appointment (SF-1402). A copy of the Contracting Officer warrant request, including the qualification statement and any waivers

granted shall be concurrently forwarded to the CMPO for input into the AWTs. Contracting activities may submit information electronically, regular mail or by facsimile. Upon full implementation of the AWTs, agencies will be asked to send notification of new COs to CMPO and key in their own CO information for report generation using the Discoverer Query software.

Within 30 work days after receipt of new appointment information, the CMPO will send the HCA/HCAD a written explanation or an electronic response with recommendations for correcting a deficiency if it is determined that:

- a The need for a Contracting Officer has not been demonstrated; or
- b The appointee does not meet the qualification requirements.

A decision or recommendation made by the CMPO may be appealed to the SPE.

39 AUTHORIZATION TO WAIVE THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS REGULATION

Unless otherwise specified, the SPE is the only individual authorized to waive the requirements of this Regulation.

40 APPOINTING FOREIGN NATIONALS AS CONTRACTING OFFICERS

Agencies shall notify OPPEP/PPD before delegating warrant authority to any individual who is not an American citizen.

41 CONTRACTING OFFICER APPOINTMENT EQUIVALENCIES

- a Completion of a 2-year associate's degree program in *procurement* may be substituted for six months of procurement experience.

- b Completion of a 4-year undergraduate program in ***procurement*** from an accredited college or university may be substituted for one year of procurement experience.
- c Completion of a graduate program in ***procurement*** from an accredited college or university may be substituted for one year of procurement experience.
- d Total equivalent experience for an employee shall not exceed one year.
- e Contract personnel who possess valid certifications as a certified contracts manager (CPCM, CACM, or SAS) by the National Contract Management Association, certified public purchasing officer by the National Institute of Government Purchasing, certified purchasing manager by the National Association of Purchasing Management, or by other professional acquisition organizations, as approved, may be credited with 80 hours of "general subject" training requirements.

42 TERMINATION/REVOCAION OF APPOINTMENT

The HCA/HCAD may terminate or revoke a Contracting Officer warrant at any time. Termination/revocation is appropriate for the following situations:

- a Failure to comply with applicable laws and regulations.
- b Violation of the code of ethical conduct. (See 5 C.F.R. Part 2635).
- c Failure to maintain training standards after appointment.
- d Failure to maintain a satisfactory performance rating.
- e Reassignment of the individual to a position not requiring a warrant.
- f Discontinuance of the organization's need for the appointment.
- g Separation of the individual from the organization (automatic termination).

43 GS-1102 QUALIFICATION STANDARD

The Office of Personnel Management and OFPP revised the GS-1102 Contract Specialist Qualification Standard in June 1997 and December 1999. A detailed explanation of the standard for civilian GS-1102 employees can be found in Appendix C.

44 APPLICATION OF THE GS-1102 QUALIFICATION STANDARD

The GS-1102 qualification standard contains provisions for employees presently in the GS-1102 series that all allows them to qualify for positions in other Federal agencies. While these employees may be eligible to compete for positions, they often may not be as competitive as the fully qualified individual competing for the same position. To the extent possible, we encourage all GS-1102 employees to meet the standard and prepare for future opportunities for career growth. Individuals entering the series and employees converting from the GS-1105 to the GS-1102 series must fully meet the revised standard.

45 EMPLOYEES OCCUPYING GS-1102 POSITIONS IN GRADES 13 THROUGH 15

Employees occupying GS-1102 positions in grades 13 through 15 and did not meet the standard outlined in Appendix C were eligible for promotions in USDA and other Federal agencies up to December 31, 1999. After January 1, 2000, these employees will remain eligible to compete for jobs at the same grade level; however, they must meet the revised standard for a promotion.

46 EMPLOYEES OCCUPYING GS-1102 POSITIONS IN GRADES 5 THROUGH 12

Employees occupying GS-1102 positions in grades 5 through 12 on January 1, 2000 are eligible for promotions in USDA and other Federal agencies up through grade 12. There is no time limit associated with promotions up to grade 12 or other limits on an employee's eligibility to compete for other Federal jobs at the same grade level. Procurement personnel competing for promotions after grade 12 must meet the GS-1102 qualification standard.

47 GS-1102 QUALIFICATION STANDARD WAIVERS

a For a specific vacant position at grade 13 and above, the GS-1102 qualification standard includes a provision that permits the SPE to waive the following requirements in unusual situations:

(1) Mandatory procurement training prescribed in this Regulation (Appendix F)

(2) 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree requirement *and/or* the

(3) 24 semester hours in specified business courses.

b To meet the conditions of OFPP Policy Letter 97-01 and the GS-1102 qualification standard, the SPE, on a nondelegable basis, must sign a certification with detailed rationalization for a decision to waive the qualification requirement(s). A waiver by the SPE will be used on rare occasions when the HCA/HCAD, on a nondelegable basis, finds and determines that - -

(1) Qualified candidates are not readily available for the position, and

(2) The applicant possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority based on demonstrated analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience.

48 ACQUISITION WORKFORCE TRACKING SYSTEM

Government wide mandates require executive agencies to collect and maintain standard Acquisition Workforce personnel data in a management information system. OPPEP is presently developing the AWTS to collect the required data. Initial data will be keyed in the system and maintained by OPPEP. Afterward, OPPEP/PPD will delegate responsibility for updating and maintaining Acquisition Workforce training records to the agencies.

49 AGENCY DOCUMENTATION FOR THE AWTS

a The HCA shall maintain a file of all Acquisition Workforce personnel in accordance with the Privacy Act. Until notified otherwise, the file shall include either an electronic or hard copy of:

- (1) The qualification statement;
- (2) The request for appointment;
- (3) Maintenance training records; and
- (4) The signed warrant certificate (hard copy only).

b As additional backup documentation, Acquisition Workforce employees are encouraged to maintain personal training records.

50 AWTS INFORMATION

a The AWTS will track USDA's Acquisition Workforce and be available to provide support to managers in making informed budgeting, staffing, and training decisions.

b The AWTS will be a Privacy Act system of records and, at a minimum, track the following elements:

- (1) Social Security Number (only as required)
- (2) Name of Individual
- (3) Departmental Agency
- (4) Organizational Identification Number (four digit codes)
- (5) Office Location and Address
- (6) Telephone/Fax Number
- (7) E-mail Address
- (8) Occupational Series and Grade or Pay Level

- (9) Current Acquisition Career Specialty
 - (a) Procurement Policy
 - (b) Information Technology
 - (c) Construction
 - (d) Architect/engineering
 - (e) General
 - (f) Simplified Acquisitions
 - (g) Major System Acquisition
(Excludes Construction or Other
Improvements to Real Property and
IT Resources)
- (10) Other Mandatory Core Training
- (11) Name of Course Taken
- (12) Training Mode (e.g., Equivalency Tests,
Formal Classroom, Waiver Based on Experience,
Etc.)
- (13) Training Source
- (14) Training Completion Date
- (15) Number of Training Hours Per Course
- (16) Skills Currency Training (Maintenance
Training)
- (17) Education - Detailed to the Level of Number
of Semester Credit Hours by Academic Disciplines,
e.g., Business, Law, Etc.
- (18) Contracting Officer Obligation Limit
- (19) Formal Classroom Training Competencies
Completed

- (20) On-the-job Competencies Completed
- (21) Contracting Officer Warrant Number
- (22) Warrant Issue Date
- (23) Warrant Expiration Date, as applicable

51 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE CAREER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

a OPPEP/PPD shall develop and issue policies, procedures, training plans, and other guidance for implementation of Acquisition Workforce mandates. As the oversight authority for USDA's Acquisition Workforce programs, the OPPEP/PPD shall:

- (1) Make final determinations on applicability of this Regulation.
- (2) Make final determinations on course equivalencies.
- (3) Review Contracting Officer appointments.
- (4) Maintain a computerized file on all Acquisition Workforce personnel.
- (5) Review agency supplements to this Regulation.
- (6) In conjunction with the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI), monitor equivalency examinations and practicums.
- (7) Establish intra departmental managerial interview groups for senior level contract personnel, as necessary.

b Heads of the Contracting Activities shall:

- (1) Establish and prescribe an Acquisition Workforce accountability system that:
 - (a) Sets a performance standard;

(b) Includes an adequate set of checks and balances;

(c) Includes external and internal review coverage;

(d) Involves annual appraisals; and

(e) Identifies effective and ineffective performance.

(2) Ensure all supervisors and Acquisition Workforce coordinators are fully knowledgeable of the program requirements and comply with the provisions.

(3) Ensure supervisors or Acquisition Workforce coordinators provide employees

proper instructions on the program and access to a copy of the *"Contract Specialist Workbook."*

(4) Forecast procurement training and other expenses in budget estimates.

(5) Ensure classroom and on-the-job assignments in IDPs are scheduled, conducted, and evaluated by the supervisor or Acquisition Workforce coordinator.

(6) Meet periodically with the CMPO to evaluate the program and prepare an annual report to the SPE.

(7) Review all Contracting Officer requests within your agency.

(8) Unless otherwise authorized, sign all Contracting Officer certificates of appointment and assure that Contracting Officers properly display the certificates.

c Supervisors or Acquisition Workforce Coordinators shall:

(1) Ensure Acquisition Workforce personnel are properly instructed in the program and as required,

have access to a copy of the "*Contract Specialist Workbook*."

- (2) Recommend individuals for Contracting Officer appointments.
- (3) Prepare, in consultation with the participant, an IDP.
- (4) Ensure classroom and on-the-job assignments in IDPs are scheduled, conducted, and evaluated.
- (5) Discuss with the employee each training and development activity upon completion.
- (6) Monitor and evaluate each participant's progress semiannually and review their progress against the IDP.

d Participating Employees shall:

- (1) Make a personal effort to take maximum advantage of developmental experiences, and training opportunities.
- (2) Actively participate with supervisors and Acquisition Workforce coordinators in discussing, developing, and preparing the IDP.
- (3) Assure that a copy of all maintenance certificates and other evidence of satisfactory training are submitted through appropriate channels for input into the AWTS upon completion of the course.

52 CIVIL RIGHTS

The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities (including the hiring, developing, and assigning of personnel) based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital or family status, or sexual orientation.

53 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All USDA acquisition personnel must comply with existing conflict of interest regulations/laws, and file the approved forms as required.

54 ETHICS

Acquisition workforce members must comply with the high standards of ethical behavior so that citizens can have complete trust in the integrity of the acquisition system.

55 AGENCY SUPPLEMENTS

Departure from these guidelines require written authorization from the SPE. Supplemental instructions and amendments require review and concurrence by OPPEP/PPD before issuance. Agencies are reminded that supplements shall not repeat, paraphrase, or restate material contained in this Regulation.

56 REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Individuals who have information concerning violations of this Regulation or other possible procurement violations may file a report with OPPEP/PPD.

57 INQUIRIES

Direct all Acquisition Workforce inquiries through agency channels to the OPPEP/PPD, telephone number (202) 720-7527 or FAX Number (202) 720-8972.

Appendix A

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET****WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503****Office of Federal Procurement Policy June 24, 1992****Policy Letter 92-3****TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND
ESTABLISHMENTS****SUBJECT: Procurement Professionalism Program Policy -****Training for Contracting Personnel**

Purpose. To establish a Government-wide standard and associated policies for skill-based training in performing contracting and purchasing duties.

Authority. This Policy Letter is issued pursuant to Section 6(a) of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Act [Public Law 93-400], as amended, (41 U.S.C. 405(a)). It establishes a standard for procurement systems (which includes the professional development of procurement personnel) under the authority of Section 6(d)(2) of the OFPP Act, as amended, (41 U.S.C. 405(d)(2)).

Background. The quality of contracting actions depends largely on the professional skills of the Government procurement workforce to help meet agency mission needs. Improved management will help ensure Government interests are effectively represented within a changing legislative and regulatory environment.

In July 1990, this office established an inter-agency group to develop a detailed Procurement Professionalism Plan for agencies to identify a comprehensive program of workforce improvement. Four subgroups devised recommended actions on the recruitment, training, retention and the evaluation of performance of the procurement workforce. The Defense Systems Management College led the training subgroup, which identified several opportunities for improvement and efficiencies when coupled with an enhanced Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI).

Among other things, the training subgroup strongly recommended competency based education for Federal contracting and purchasing personnel. Competency-

based education refers to programs that provide an opportunity for the trainee to develop and demonstrate an appropriate level of skill (given the characteristics of the agency's overall mission) at performing a duty. The training subgroup recommendations were used in formulating this policy.

This Policy Letter establishes a standard set of contracting competencies after repeated and extensive coordination with Executive agencies through the FAI. The FAI conducted Government-wide research from 1977 to 1979 to identify contract management tasks. The survey used had a very high participation rate of almost half of all contract specialists in all Executive agencies at the time. During the period 1980 - 1985, FAI worked with representatives of Procurement Executives to select duties and tasks for training. The selected duties collectively constitute the body of Contracting "competencies." Subsequently, the FAI developed "Units of Instruction" for core competencies, each of which is a blueprint for training one of the selected duties both in the classroom and on-the-job. In 1992, the FAI published these "Units of Instruction" under the title Contract Specialist Workbook. The 1992 edition covers almost 80 duties (see the Contract Specialist Workbook for an updated summary list) and more than 800 related tasks. Every contracting official in the Federal Government is expected to attain an appropriate level of skill at performing all contracting competencies identified by FAI. However, agencies may modify this standard by assigning levels of learning commensurate with agency needs and adding agency-level competencies.

Policy. Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies shall ensure that the procurement career management program required under Section 16 of the OFPP Act (41 U.S.C. 414(4)):

a. Requires personnel in the contracting occupational series (General Schedule Series 1102), and uniformed personnel in comparable positions, to complete course work and related on-the-job training necessary to attain an appropriate level of skill (given the unique missions, policies and workload of the agency) in each Contract Management duty represented by a Unit of Instruction in the FAI Contract Specialist Workbook. These may be supplemented with additional contracting duties and tasks by the agency head. Alternative means may be used for these individuals to demonstrate their competence to perform required duties (e.g. through practicums, equivalency examinations, or managerial reviews of an individual's current level of skill in each duty);

b. Requires civilian and uniformed personnel appointed under Section 1.6 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) as contracting officers with authority to award or administer contracts above the small purchase threshold to complete course work and related on-the-job training necessary to attain an appropriate level of skill (given the unique missions, policies, and workload of the agency) in each Contract Management duty represented by a Unit of Instruction in the FAI Contract Specialist Workbook, or otherwise demonstrate their competence to perform those duties through alternative means;

- c. Requires personnel in the purchasing occupational series (General Schedule Series 1105), other civilian and uniformed personnel performing purchasing duties, and individuals with contracting authority at or under the small purchase threshold, or with authority to place delivery orders at any dollar level, to complete training in duties related to making small purchases under FAR Part 13 and placing delivery orders;
- d. Provides for a system for certifying and reporting the completion of all required courses and on-the-job training;
- e. Encourages self-development activities of contracting personnel to stay current with the acquisition knowledge base for professional growth throughout their careers, and
- f. Directs the Senior Procurement Executive to designate a procurement career manager with authority for agency-wide policy and oversight responsibility for the procurement career management program, including authority and responsibility for working in cooperation with other agencies through the FAI to make the most effective and efficient use of existing instructional material or facilities and minimize duplication of effort in the development and delivery of training and education.

Implementation. The FAI is developing instructional materials in the contracting competencies to support comprehensive training in formal classroom settings as well as at the work site and through on-the-job training. FAI training courses now available or under development include "Introduction to Contracting," "Procurement Planning," "Sealed Bidding," "Negotiation Process," "Price Analysis," "Cost Analysis," "Advanced Cost or Price Analysis," "Basic Contract Administration," "Construction Contracting," "Contracting for Federal Information Processing Resources," and "Source Section." These courses will be offered by the General Services Administration Interagency Training Center.

As courses are completed, the FAI will provide the instructional materials for that course (in hard copy or electronic forms) to agencies for incorporation (in whole or in part, with any necessary agency-specific tailoring) in their respective courses. An agency may modify the Contract Specialist Workbook, and associated FAI instructional materials, to reflect the unique missions, policies and workload of the agency.

The Director of FAI shall further assist agency training programs through the following actions:

- Maintain the Contract Specialist Workbook as a Government-wide standard for the professional development of contracting personnel, and distribute copies of Procurement Executives.

- Recommend minimum Government-wide training requirements and goals to the Administrator, OFPP.
- Assist agencies, and encourage cooperation among agencies, in the development of instructional materials to implement the training requirements of Section 4 above.
- Advise the Administrator, OFPP, on the effectiveness of Federal training programs to develop competence in the performance of acquisition-related duties and tasks.
- Establish joint programs with other Federal procurement training facilities or contracting activities under Section 4103 of Title 5, United States Code, to help Federal agencies implement provisions of this Policy Letter.
- Assist colleges and universities in establishing procurement and acquisition courses as part of continuing education, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate programs.
- Review the acquisition courses of colleges and universities, identify and document the levels of learning attained in contracting duties and tasks, and recommend academic courses to Procurement Executives that may be substituted for Government training in those duties and tasks.

Reporting Requirements. Within 90 days of the effective date of this Policy Letter, the Senior Procurement Executive of each agency is to advise the Administrator, OFPP, of the agency's procurement career management program required by 41 U.S.C. 414(4) and implementing Section 4 of this letter, including:

- (1) a description of the agency's plan for prescribing and providing the training required;
- (2) a description of actions taken or planned to assess the extent to which training courses now provide, or will provide, skill training in the Units of Instruction of the FAI Contract Specialist Workbook, including the level of skill in each Contract Management duty that the training will be designed to attain;
- (3) a description of the agency's system for certifying and reporting the completion of training requirements, and
- (4) the name and position of the individual designated under Section 4.f. above.

Periodic reports on the procurement career management program may be requested by the Administrator, OFPP, thereafter.

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Councils. The Defense Acquisition Regulatory Council and the Civilian Agency Acquisition Council shall conduct a thorough review of the relevant parts of the FAR to (1) assure that no unintended encumbrances to this Policy Letter are contained therein, and (2) that the policies established by this Policy Letter are fully reflected in the FAR within 210 days of the effective date of this Policy Letter. Issuance of final regulations within this 210-day period shall be considered issuance "in a timely manner" as prescribed in 41 U.S.C. §§ 405(b).

Judicial Review. This Policy Letter is not intended to provide a constitutional or statutory interpretation of any kind, and it is not intended, and should not be construed, to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person. It is intended only to provide policy guidance to agencies in the exercise of their discretion concerning Federal contracting. Thus, this Policy Letter is not intended, and should not be construed, to create any substantive or procedural basis on which to challenge any agency action or inaction on the ground that such action or inaction was not in accordance with this Policy Letter.

Effective Date. This Policy Letter is effective 30 days after the date of issuance.

Information. Questions or inquiries about this Policy Letter should be directed to Mr. Wayne Wittig, Deputy Associate Administrator, OFPP, 725 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20503, telephone (202) 395-6803.

Allan V. Burman Administrator

Appendix B

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

Office of Federal Procurement Policy September 12, 1997

POLICY LETTER NO. 97-01

TO THE HEADS OF CIVILIAN EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Procurement System Education, Training and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel

1. Purpose. The purpose of this Letter is to implement Section 37 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act, as amended (hereafter referred to as the Act).
2. Authority. These policies and procedures are issued pursuant to Section 37(b)(3) of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Act, as amended, (41 U.S.C. 401 *et seq.*), which directs the Administrator, Office of Federal Procurement Policy, to issue policies to promote uniform implementation of Section 37 of the Act by executive agencies, with due regard for differences in program requirements among agencies that may be appropriate and warranted in view of the agency mission.
3. Background. Beginning with the report of the Commission on Government Procurement in 1972, every major study of the Federal acquisition process has recommended improvements in the management of the acquisition workforce, because "people are the most critical part of any effective procurement process". Subsequently, Congress directed every Federal department and agency to develop and maintain a procurement career management program to ensure an adequate professional workforce (section 16(4) of the Act). In Section 6(d)(5) of the Act, Congress further directed the OFPP Administrator, through the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI), to foster and promote the development of a professional acquisition workforce Government-wide. Pursuant to these statutory mandates, OFPP Policy Letter 92-3 (implemented in section 1.603-1 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation) establishes Government-wide policies and standards for skill-based training in performing contracting duties and tasks. In 1990 Congress passed the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) which established education, training and experience requirements for entry and advancement in the acquisition career field within the Department of Defense (DOD). In 1996, Congress amended the OFPP Act to establish comparable education, training, and experience requirements for civilian agencies.
4. Applicability. This Letter applies to all executive agencies, except those subject to the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (chapter 87 of title 10, United States Code).
5. Responsibility for Acquisition Career management Programs. Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the head of an executive agency, the Senior Procurement Executive of the agency shall carry out all powers, functions, and duties of the head of the agency with respect to implementation of this Letter. The Senior Procurement Executive shall ensure that the policies of the head of the agency, established in accordance with this Letter, are implemented throughout the agency.
6. Establishment of Agency-wide Policies and Procedures. Agency heads, after consultation with the OFPP Administrator, shall establish department or agency-wide policies and procedures pursuant to the provisions of the Act. The Senior Procurement Executive of each affected agency shall advise the Administrator, within 180 days from the date of this Letter, on agency plans for

issuing such policies and procedures for the effective management (including accessions, education, training and career development) of the acquisition workforce. Agency heads, unless otherwise advised by the OFPP Administrator within thirty (30) days after such notification, shall proceed with planned implementation activities. To the maximum extent practicable, these acquisition workforce policies and procedures shall be uniform in their implementation throughout the agency. The head of each department and agency shall issue such policies and procedures by May 1, 1998.

7. Workforce Coverage. For purposes of this Letter, the acquisition workforce of an agency includes:

- a. All positions in the General Schedule (GS-1102) Contracting Series and non-DOD uniformed personnel in comparable positions.
- b. All Contracting Officers regardless of General Schedule series with authority to obligate funds above the micropurchase threshold.
- c. All positions in GS-1105 Purchasing Series.
- d. All Contracting Officer Representatives/Contracting Officer Technical Representatives, or equivalent positions.

The Administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy will consult with the agencies in the identification of other acquisition related positions.

8. Management Information System. Agencies are required to collect and maintain standardized information on implementation of the provisions of section 37 of the Act. The Federal Acquisition Institute will work with the agencies and the Office of Personnel Management to establish and prescribe standard data elements for the purposes of this statutory requirement. To the maximum extent practicable, such management information systems will conform to the standards established by the Office of Personnel Management for the Central Personnel Data File. These systems shall include a data element on waivers under paragraph 9.g. of this Letter.

9. Career Development.

- a. Career Paths - Agencies shall identify and publish model career paths or "road maps" to ensure that contracting and other personnel interested in pursuing careers in contracting are knowledgeable of the education, training, and experience requirements for employment, progression and advancement to the most senior positions in the contracting field within the agency.
- b. Critical Skills - For each career path, the critical acquisition-related duties and tasks employees must be competent to perform at the full performance and senior levels shall be established by the agencies and shall include coverage of duties and tasks as identified by the Director of the Federal Acquisition Institute. OFPP Policy Letter 92-3 established Government-wide standards for these purposes.

c. **Mandatory Education** - The education requirements for acquisition positions are established by the OFPP Administrator, in coordination with the Office of Personnel Management, as prescribed by section 37(g) of the Act. The education requirements for GS-1102 positions have been established in coordination with the Office of Personnel Management.

d. **Mandatory Training and Experience** - Experience requirements for GS-1102 positions are identified in the OPM Contract Specialist (GS-1102) Qualification Standard. In addition to the following mandatory training, agencies may require assignment-specific training for personnel in selected positions, as appropriate:

(1) All personnel in the GS-1102 Contracting Series and Contracting Officers (regardless of General Schedule Series) with authority to obligate funds above the micropurchase threshold shall complete the mandatory and related on-the-job training, as prescribed in OFPP Policy Letter 92-3.

(2) All Personnel in the Purchasing occupational series (General Schedule Series 1105), other civilian and uniformed personnel performing purchasing duties, and individuals with contracting authority at or below the simplified acquisition threshold, or with authority to place delivery orders at any dollar level, shall complete training in acquiring goods and services under FAR Part 13 and placing delivery orders.

(3) Contracting Officer Representatives/Contracting Officer Technical Representatives (CORs/COTRs) - The core training for CORs/COTRs must cover the competencies as contained in the FAI COR/COTR Workbook. Agencies may consider any training methodology to satisfy this requirement, i.e., classroom, correspondence, computer-based instruction, etc.

(4) Other acquisition related occupations - Training for these participants in the procurement process will be established as such occupations are identified by the OFPP Administrator.

e. **Skills Currency** - Agencies shall establish policies that require an equivalent of at least 40 hours of continuing education or training every two years for contract specialists (GS-1102 series) and Contracting Officers who have satisfied the mandatory and agency/assignment-specific training for the purpose of maintaining currency of acquisition knowledge and skills. This may include, but is not limited to, agency sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special job and/or professional association related projects and/or participation in seminars/workshops, or other appropriated developmental activities.

f. Tuition Assistance - The head of an executive agency may provide tuition reimbursement in education (including a full-time course of study leading to a degree) in accordance with section 4107 of title 5, United States Code, for personnel serving in acquisition positions in the agency.

g. Waiver Authority for GS-1102 Education Requirements. The agency Senior Procurement Executive may, based on demonstrated analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience, waive one of the two sets of education requirements for an applicant for a GS-13 and above position based on a certification (see Contract Specialist (GS-1102) Qualification Standard) that the applicant possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority. This waiver should be utilized only in rare and unusual circumstances, i.e., when there are no qualified candidates readily available. The use of this authority should be adequately documented and exercised on a case-by-case basis.

h. Funding Levels - The head of an executive agency shall set forth separately the funding levels requested for education and training of the acquisition workforce in the

budget justification documents submitted in support of the President's budget submitted to Congress under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code. Funds appropriated for education and training under this section may not be obligated for any other purpose.

i. Program Evaluation - The OFPP Administrator shall evaluate the implementation of these provisions by executive agencies.

10. FAI Responsibilities. The OFPP Administrator is responsible for providing for and directing the activities of the FAI. The FAI is in turn responsible for a wide range of career management support activities associated with maintaining the inventory of acquisition personnel competencies for use by Federal and private sector education and training communities and providing specific and general technical assistance to Federal agencies in improving the quality of the acquisition workforce.

As courseware (including Workbooks) are developed and/or updated, these products will be made available through the FAI Homepage. The FAI Homepage address is: <http://www.gsa.gov/staff/v/training.htm>. The FAI specific responsibilities relating to the provisions of this Letter are to:

- a. foster and promote the development of a professional acquisition workforce;
- b. promote and coordinate Government-wide research and studies to improve the procurement process and the laws, policies, methods, regulations, procedures, and forms relating to acquisition by the executive agencies;

- c. collect and analyze acquisition workforce data from the Office of Personnel Management, the heads of executive agencies and, through periodic surveys of individual employees;
- d. periodically analyze acquisition career fields to identify critical competencies, duties, tasks, and related academic prerequisites, skills, and knowledge;
- e. Coordinate and assist agencies in identifying and recruiting highly qualified candidates for acquisition fields;
- f. develop instructional material for acquisition personnel in coordination with private and public acquisition colleges and training facilities;
- g. evaluate the effectiveness of training and career development programs for acquisition personnel;
- h. promote the establishment and utilization of academic programs by colleges and universities in acquisition fields;
- i. facilitate, to the extent requested by agencies, interagency intern and training programs; and
- j. perform other career management and research functions as directed by the Administrator.

11. Information Contact. Questions regarding this Policy Letter should be directed to Richard C. Loeb, Executive Secretary, Office of Federal Procurement Policy, 202-395-3254, facsimile, 202-395-5105. The address is Office of Federal Procurement Policy, 725 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20503.

12. Judicial Review. This Policy Letter is not intended to provide a constitutional or statutory interpretation of any kind and it is not intended, and should not be construed, to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any persons. It is intended only to provide policy guidance to agencies in the exercise of their discretion concerning Federal contracting. Thus, this Policy Letter is not intended, and should not be construed, to create any substantive or procedural basis on which to challenge any agency action or inaction on the ground that such action or inaction was not in accordance with this Policy Letter.

13. Effective Date. This Policy Letter is effective 30 days after the date of issuance.

Steven Kelman Administrator

Appendix C

Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions

Individual Occupational Requirements for

GS-1102: Contract Specialist

Revised Standard Effective Date January 1, 2000

The text below is extracted verbatim from Section IV-B of the Operating Manual for Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions (p.166-167), but contains minor edits to conform to web-page requirements. This is an individual qualification standard developed by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy under the authority of 41 U.S.C. 433. It does not apply to Department of Defense positions.

Basic Requirements for GS-5 through GS-12

A. 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field;

OR

B. At least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

Applicants who meet the criteria for Superior Academic Achievement qualify for positions at the GS-7 level.

The following table shows the amounts of education and/or experience required to qualify for positions GS-7 through GS-12 covered by this standard.

GRADE EDUCATION
OR SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE

GS-7	1 full academic year of graduate education or law school or superior academic achievement	1 year equivalent to at least GS-5
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GS-9	2 full academic years of progressively higher level graduate education or masters or equivalent graduate degree or LL.B. or J.D.	1 year equivalent to at least GS-7
GS-11	3 full academic years of progressively higher level graduate education or Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral degree	1 year equivalent to at least GS-9
GS-12 and above	(No educational equivalent)	1 year equivalent to at least next lower grade level
Equivalent combinations of education and experience are qualifying for all grade levels for which both education and experience are acceptable.		

Graduate Education. To qualify for GS-1102 positions on the basis of graduate education, graduate education in one or a combination of the following fields is required: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

Note - For positions at GS-7 through GS-12, applicants who are qualifying based on experience must possess at least one year of specialized experience at or equivalent to work at the next lower level, that provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the work of the position, in addition to meeting the basic requirements in paragraph A or B, above.

C. Exceptions: Employees in GS-1102 positions will be considered to have met the standard for positions they occupy on January 1, 2000. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at grades 5 through 12 will be considered to meet the basic requirements for other GS-1102 positions up to and including those classified at GS-12. This includes positions at other agencies and promotions up through grade 12. However, employees must meet specialized experience requirements when seeking another position.

Basic Requirements for GS-13 and Above

1. Completion of all mandatory training prescribed by the head of the agency for progression to GS-13 or higher level contracting positions, including at least 4-years experience in contracting or related positions. At least 1 year of that experience must have been specialized experience at or equivalent to work at the next lower level of the position, and must have provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the work of the position.

AND

2. A 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree, that included or was supplemented by at least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics,

industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.


3. Exceptions: Employees in GS-1102 positions will be considered to have met the standard for positions they occupy on January 1, 2000. This also applies to positions at the same grade in the same agency or other agencies if the specialized experience requirements are met. However, they will have to meet the basic requirements and specialized experience requirements in order to qualify for promotion to a higher grade, unless granted a waiver under Paragraph D.
4. Waiver: When filling a specific vacant position, the senior procurement executive of the selecting agency, at his or her discretion, may waive any or all of the requirements of Paragraphs A and B above if the senior procurement executive certifies that the applicant possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority, based on demonstrated analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience. With respect to each waiver granted under this Paragraph D, the senior procurement executive must document for the record the basis of the waiver. If an individual is placed in a position in an agency on the basis of a waiver, the agency may later reassign that individual to another position at the same grade within that agency without additional waiver action.

APPENDIX D

Contracting Officer Warrant Authority

For GS-1102/GS-1105 Personnel, Contracting Officers, and

Heads of the Contracting Activity Designee

 Level	Minimum Procurement Experience/ Series	Contract Duties (%)	Minimum Education	Minimum Training	Maintenance Training

Level IA	1 Year Any Job Series	25%	High School	Simplified Acquisition Courses or equivalent (60 hours)	40 hours of contract training every two years.
Level I B	2 Years Any Job Series	50%		Simplified Acquisition Courses or equivalent (100) hours	
* Level I C	4 Years GS-1102 and GS-1105	90%		Simplified Acquisition Courses, CON 101 or equivalent (160 hours)	
◇ Head of the Contracting Activity Designee	N/A	N/A	N/A	160 hours of contracting	40 hours of contract training every two years is recommended

⚠ Level I Contracting Officers are limited to writing simplified contract format Delivery Orders, Purchase Orders, and calls up to their delegated amounts only.

* Level IC Contracting Officers must have 24 hours of construction, A/E, or IT training prior to awarding contracts over \$25,000 in specialized areas.

There are no grade levels associated with Level I Contracting Officer warrant authority.

All GS-1105 employees, warranted or unwarranted, must complete a detailed Simplified Acquisition course.

◇ The Head of the Contracting Activity Designee is most often an Administrative Service Director who is tasked with managing the day to day activities of the contracting organization.

* 40 hours of specialized training is required for IT, construction and A/E warrant authority.

APPENDIX E

CONTRACTING OFFICER WARRANT AUTHORITY

FOR GS-1102 PERSONNEL

Level and / or Typical Minimum Grade	Minimum Procurement Experience	Contract Duties (%)	Minimum *Education	Minimum Training/OJT	Maintenance Training	
Level II A (GS-1102/11)	4 Years	90%	Mandatory 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field OR	CON 101, CON 104, and CON 210 or equivalent	Contracting Officers must obtain a minimum of 40 hours of training every two years	U
Level II B (GS-1102/11)	6 Years	90%	At least 24 semester hours in business.	CON 101, CON 104, and CON 210 or equivalent		U
Level III A (GS-1102/11)	7 Years	90%	* Employees currently in the in GS-1102 position will be considered to have met minimum qualification requirements as outlined in OPM's GS-1102 Qualification	CON 101, CON 104, CON 202, CON 204, and CON 210 or equivalent		U
Level III B (GS-1102/11)	9 Years	90%		CON 101, CON 104, CON 202, CON 204, and CON 210 or equivalent		U

Level III C (GS-1102/11)	10 Years	90%	Standard.	CON 101, CON 104, CON 202, CON 204, and CON 210 or equivalent		U
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Level II Contracting Officers awarding IT resources must have 40 hours of IT training; Level III Contracting Officers awarding IT resources must have 80 hours of IT training.

Level II and III Contracting Officers awarding Construction and A/E contracts must have 40 hours of "Construction and A/E" training

Appendix D outlines Level I Contracting Officer requirements for GS-1102 employees.

APPENDIX F

Education and Training for

GS-1102 Personnel

GS-1102 Grade Level	Education	Minimum Training/OJT During Grade Levels
GS- 5 through 9	Mandatory 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field OR At least 24 semester hours in business AND Specialized experience as outlined in the GS-1102 Qualification Standard.	Simplified Acquisition Procedures and CON 101 or equivalent. Other courses as determined by the SPE or HCA.
GS- 10 through 12		CON 104 , CON 202, CON 210, and CON 204 or equivalent. Other courses as determined by the SPE or HCA.
GS-13 and above	Mandatory 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field AND At least 24 semester hours in business AND Specialized experience as outlined in the GS-1102 Qualification Standard.	Other courses as determined by SPE and HCA. (GS-1102 employees grades 13 and above are also urged to take CON 301 or equivalent when available.)

Requirements outside of OPM's GS-1102 Qualification standard are subject to revision by the SPE.

APPENDIX G

TRAINING FOR CONTRACTING OFFICER REPRESENTATIVES

or EQUIVALENT POSITIONS

Level	Experience	Formal Training Subject Areas	Minimum OJT Competencies (Duties)	Training Hours
Level I	None	Basic COR Course Federal Acquisition Process		40
Level II	One year as a Level I COR. Must demonstrate competence assigned COR duties outlined in FAI's <i>COR Workbook</i> .	Prepare Purchase Request Package/Market Research Prepare/Review Requirements Develop a COR Workplan Post Award Orientation Inspection and Acceptance Payment/Closeout	* 2A, 2C, 3, 4, 5A,5B, Payment, Closeout	64
Level III	One year as a Level II COR. Must demonstrate competence in all COR duties outlined in FAI's <i>COR Workbook</i> .	Property Administration/Government Furnished Property Property Contract Modification Delays/Stop Work/ Claims/Remedies/Terminations Monitor Compliance/Monitor Costs	* 6,7,8, 9, 10, 2B, 11, 12, 13	88
Other Acquisition Personnel as Designated by the HCA or SPE				

Minimum training, competencies and OJT requirements are cumulative.

Requirements outside of Government-wide training requirements are subject to change by the SPE.

* See Appendix J for duty descriptions. OJT Units may be waived pursuant to Section 2, Paragraph 4.

PLAN FOR TRAINING CONTRACT SPECIALIST

SKILL LEVELS

1. **KNOWLEDGE.** Ability to describe the duty, – what (i.e., definition and scope), when performed (i.e., circumstances and conditions), and why performed (i.e., purpose and standards for performance).
2. **COMPREHENSION.** Ability to (a) describe the duty and (b) detail how the duty is performed (process/flowchart, tasks, subtasks, critical decisions, decision making criteria and models, software, et. al.).

3. **APPLICATION.** Ability to (a) describe the duty, (b) detail how the duty is performed, and (c) perform critical aspects of the duty under actual or simulated conditions in a learning environment.

4. **ANALYSIS.** Ability to (a) describe the duty, (b) detail how the duty is performed, and (c) perform critical aspects of the duty for a selected task or tasks under more complex actual or simulated conditions in a learning environment.

SKILL LEVELS:

The following pages list the contract specialist duty descriptions with recommended skill levels. HCA/HCADs are authorized to revise the skill levels and supplement duty descriptions as needed for their missions areas. The APPLICATION and ANALYSIS skill levels require OJT.

On-The-Job Training Needed?

Unit	Duty	Yes	Plan for training the Duty
1	Forecasting Requirements/Acquisition Strategy- Collect data from requirements. Managers on future acquisition requirements. Advise the managers on policies and long- range strategies for enhancing competition, minimizing costs, reducing lead-times, etc. Plan and organize to meet the anticipated, aggregate requirements. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
2	Acquisition Planning Assist managers in preparing written, formal acquisition plans <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
3	Purchase Requests Review the purchase request (PR), obtain additional information and corrections to complete the PR, accept the PR, establish the contract file, and control data on the acquisition. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
4	Funding Determine if sufficient, applicable funds have been committed prior to solicitation <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
5	Market Research-Market Investigation & Early Exchanges. Obtain data from acquisitions histories and other in-office sources. Collect and compile additional market information. Determine whether and how to initiate exchanges of information with		

	<p>participate in early exchanges.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
6	<p>Requirements Documents Review and critique proposed Requirement Documents (RDs) and SOWs. Determine (1) commerciality (e.g., whether FAR part 12 applies) and (2) whether or not to procure through SAP.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
7	<p>Use of Government Property and Supply Sources Determine whether to furnish Government property or authorize use of Government supply sources by the contractor.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
8	<p>Services Screen PRs for requests to acquire personal services or advisory and assistance services. Determine whether there is sufficient justification, approvals, and legal authority to make such acquisitions. Where applicable, request Wage Determinations for incorporation in the solicitation.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

9	<p>Sources Screen purchase requests against (1) required sources of supply; (2) QBLs, QMLs, and QPLs; and (3) interagency sources. If none apply, develop and maintain an open market source list.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
10	<p>SA Competition Requirements Determine whether to solicit from only one source or a limited number of sources.</p> <p>Competition Requirements (over SAT) Determine whether to meet the requirement through "other than full and open competition" or after the exclusion of sources.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
10B	<p>Unsolicited Proposals Process unsolicited proposals and determine whether to noncompetitively acquire the offered services.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
	<p>Small Business Set-Asides Determine whether the procurement will be set-aside in part or in whole for small business concerns. (1.1.3 in part)</p>		

11	<p>small business concerns. (1.1.3 in part)</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
12	<p>8(a) Procurements Determine whether to obtain the supply or service through SBA under the 8(a) program.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
13	<p>Unsolicited Proposals Process unsolicited proposals and determine whether to noncompetitively acquire the offered services.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
13	<p>Lease Vs. Purchase Determine whether to solicit for lease, purchase, or both.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
14	<p>Price Related Factors Identify applicable factors (e.g., multiple award, Buy American, energy efficiency, transportation, life cycle costs) for the solicitation.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
15	<p>Non-Price Factors Review proposed business management and technical evaluation factors; determine how the factors will be applied in evaluating offers (i.e., as go/no-go or ranking factors). Determine whether to award on "lowest price" or "greatest value."</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
16	<p>A. Method of Procurement Determine whether to award under FAR Part 13, 14, 15 (without discussions, or 15 (with discussions). (1.1.5)</p> <p>B. Method for Soliciting Quotes If award is to be made under FAR Part 13, determine method for soliciting quotes. (e.g., FACNET, oral, written RFQ, or electronic channels other than FACNET)</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

17	<p>Contract Type (Pricing Arrangement) Identify and solicit the type of contractual pricing arrangement (e.g., FFP, FP-EPA, FPI, FPR, CPFF, CP-AF, CPIF, et. al.) that will best mitigate and apportion expected risks</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
	<p>Recurring Requirements Determine appropriate method (if any) to solicit for currently unfunded,</p>		

18	<p>Purchase Agreements, Options, Indefinite Task/Delivery Order contracts, and/or multiyear clauses (e.g., FAR 52.217-1).</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
19	<p>Unpriced Contracts (letter contracts & unpriced purchase orders) Determine whether to use a letter contract; draft and issue letter contracts. Determine whether to use an unpriced order; draft and issue unpriced orders.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
20.1	<p>Contract Financing for Commercial Contracts Determine whether to solicit based on no buyer financing, specified buyer financing, or buyer financing as an evaluation factor. (1.1.6 in part)</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
20.2	<p>Contract Financing for Noncommercial Contracts Determine the type (if any) of Government financing to make available (e.g., progress payments, advance payments, guaranteed loans, performance-based payments, etc.).</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
21	<p>Need For Bonds Determine whether bonds are required or necessary to protect the Government from market risks.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
22	<p>Method of Payment Determine the method of payment (i.e., electronic funds transfer, IMPAC card, traditional billing, et. al.) (1.1.6 in part)</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
23	<p>Procurement Plans Establish milestones for solicitation, evaluation, and award tasks. Identify responsible parties and assign tasks.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

24	<p>Publicizing Proposed Procurements If required, prepare and forward the CBD notice. If required, post RFQs. Select and employ any other method for publicizing the requirement. Issue the solicitation to potential offerors and otherwise make it available.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
	<p>Conduct Oral Solicitations Solicit quotes by phone or fax.</p>		

25	<p>fax.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
26	<p>RFQ Preparation (Noncommercial) Prepare FACNET RFQs. Prepare written RFQs to solicit quotes outside of FACNET.</p> <p>Solicitation Preparation (IFBs for Noncommercial Contracts) Identify and incorporate provisions and clauses that apply to the acquisition. Assemble an Invitation for Bids (IFB).</p> <p>Solicitation Preparation (Commercial) Identify, complete, and incorporate FAR Part 12 clauses and provisions. Incorporate other terms and conditions required for the acquisition. Identify customary commercial terms and conditions and determine which to incorporate (if any). Prepare the SF 1449.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
27	<p>Preaward Inquiries Answer sensitive questions about the solicitation.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
28	<p>Prebid/Preproposal Conferences Provide offerors with a public forum to review the site (if any), question the solicitation, and express any concerns about the solicitation.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
29A &29B	<p>Amending Solicitations Determine whether there is a need to amend or cancel the solicitation. If an amendment is necessary, prepare and issue it.</p> <p>Cancelling Solicitations (RFQs/RFPs) Cancel an RFQ/RFP.</p> <p>Cancelling Solicitations (IFBs) Cancel an IFB before opening.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
30	<p>Processing Bids Receive and control bids submitted against an Invitation for Bids. Determine whether to postpone the bid opening. Open and abstract bids.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

31	<p>Bid Acceptance Periods Identify the acceptance period for the low bid. If award will be delayed, ask the low bidders to extend the period for accepting their</p>		
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	bids. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
32	Late Offers Determine whether a "late" bid may be considered for award. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
33	Bid Prices Applying the price related factors in the IFB, identify the low bid for each potential award against the IFB. Determine the reasonableness of the lowest price bid. Select the appropriate option if the lowest price is unreasonably high (e.g., cancellation) or unreasonably low (e.g., verification of the bid). <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
34	Responsiveness Determine whether the lowest bid is responsive to the terms and conditions of the IFB. Resolve minor informalities and irregularities. Reject nonresponsive bids. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
35	Processing Proposals/Quotes Receive and control proposals/quotes. Resolve late offers/quotes. Identify and request the services of technical and other personnel for proposal evaluation. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i>		
36	Applying Past Performance, Technical and Other Nonprice Factors Review findings and recommendations of technical personnel on (a) technical acceptability of the offer/quote, (b) technical deficiencies, and (c) the relative standing of the offers/quotes based on nonprice factors. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
37	Price Analysis (Negotiation) Prior to soliciting: (1) critique the IGCE, (2) collect price-related information when researching markets, (3) forecast likely prices, and (4) investigate potential tradeoffs between expected prices and proposed solicitation terms and conditions. After receipt of quotes/offers: Apply price related factors in the solicitation &/or offers/quotes; evaluate and compare prices. Determine the realism and reasonableness of proposed prices, make price-related decisions, and develop price-related prenegotiation objectives for discussions (if any) with vendors. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		

	Pricing Information From Offerors Determine whether certified cost or price data are required		
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38	request the data, and obtain the certificate. Determine the need for information from offerors other than cost or pricing data. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
39	Audits & Technical Reviews. Determine whether to audit the submitted cost and pricing data. Obtain and review audit reports. Request (where necessary) technical analyses of the reasonableness of proposed tasks, schedules, labor hours, material mix & quantities, etc. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
40	Cost Analysis Develop prenegotiation positions on proposed elements of cost and/or fee. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
41	Evaluating Other Terms and Conditions (e.g., Lease vs. Purchase) Compare offers to lease against offers to sell. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
42	Award Without Discussions Determine whether to award without discussions; make such awards. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
43	Fact-finding Identify and collect information from the offeror necessary to complete the Government's analysis of the proposal. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
44	Extent of Discussions (Competitive Range) Determine whether to award without discussions. FAR Part 15: If discussions are necessary, define the range and notify offerors outside the range. FAR Part 13: Determine necessity and extent of discussions with one or more of the quoters. Select vendors for discussions. <i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i>		
45	Negotiation Strategy Prepare a prenegotiation plan which establishes objectives, priorities, and potential tradeoffs for discussions with the offeror. Brief the plan and rehearse the discussions. Prepare an agenda for the discussions. Conducting Negotiations Discuss proposals with offerors. After concluding competitive discussions, request and evaluate best and final offers. <i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i>		
	Conducting Discussions/Negotiations Conduct one or more negotiation sessions and document in the		

46	<p>agreement.</p> <p>. In a sole source situation</p> <p>. As part of a competitive procurement</p> <p>. As part of a post award negotiation</p> <p>(e.g., a contract modification)</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
47	<p>Debriefing As requested, debrief vendors.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

48	<p>Responsibility Determine whether the offeror meets the general and any special standards of responsibility.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
49	<p>Subcontracting Requirements - Where required, obtain a subcontracting plan from the offeror and negotiate improvements to it. Negotiate make or buy programs.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
50	<p>Preparing Awards FAR Part 13 Procurements: Select contractor. Prepare purchase orders and document award</p> <p>FAR Part 14 and 15 Procurements: Reverify funding. Make or obtain final source selection decision. Prepare contract and document the recommendation for award. Obtain approvals for awarding the contract.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
51	<p>Issuing Awards and related Notices - Execute the contract. Notify the awardee and other parties, as required.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
52	<p>Mistakes In Offers Pre-award mistakes in bids: Identify potential mistakes; verify bids; resolve alleged mistakes.</p> <p>Post-award mistakes: Investigate and resolve mistakes alleged after award.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

53	<p>Protests Research and prepare positions on protests of the award. Respond to the protests as provided in the procedures for the forum or forums in which the protest has been filed - the agency, GAO, SBA (protests Re: eligibility for set asides), or the courts. Resolve protests through ADR.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
54	<p>Contract Administration Planning - Review the contract and related acquisition histories. Determine the criticality of the contract. Identify key milestones. Delegate authority to CORs, COTRs, and/or ACOs.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
55	<p>Post-Award Orientations - Determine whether to orient the contractor. Determine the method (phone, letter, or conference). Conduct post-award orientation conferences.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
56	<p>Consent to Subcontracting- Determine whether consent is required under the terms and conditions of the contract. Obtain proposed subcontract. Consent or nonconsent.</p> <p>Determine whether and when to review the contractor's purchasing system. Negotiate improvements and monitor implementation. Take measures to protect the Government if the purchasing system is deficient. Monitor compliance with make-or-buy plans.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
57	<p>Subcontracting Requirements- Monitor contracting performance against subcontracting plans and other clauses regarding the placement of subcontract with small businesses, women-owned businesses, and the like. Where necessary, invoke applicable remedies.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
58	<p>Contract Modifications (Commercial Contracts) Determine the need for supplemental agreements. Negotiate and execute supplemental agreements.</p> <p>Contract Modifications (Noncommercial Contracts) Review proposed modifications against the scope of work and availability of funds. Determine whether to modify the contract and the type of modification to employ. Implement the modification.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
59	<p>Options Reverify the reasonableness of an option price, through a formal solicitation or market research. Determine whether to exercise the option. Notify the contractor.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

60	<p>Task Order and Deliver Order Contracting Establish task and delivery order contracts. Issue orders for supplies and services from FAR Part 8 sources. Issues orders against single award task and delivery order contract. Order against a multiple award task or delivery contract. Determine whether to order against the BOA; prepare and issue orders against BOAs.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
61	<p>Monitoring, Inspection, and Acceptance (Commercial Contracts) Determine whether acceptance will be based on contractor assurances or inspection by Federal officials. Identify, investigate, document, and resolve potential or actual problems</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

61	<p>Monitoring, Inspection, and Acceptance (Noncommercial Contracts) Monitor compliance with the Schedule (e.g., UCF AB-BH) by both the contractor and the Government. Identify, investigate, document, and resolve potential or actual problems.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
62	<p>Delays Determine whether delay is excusable and negotiate consideration when acquiring commercial and non-commercial items.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
63	<p>Stop Work Determine whether to stop work; prepare and issue the stop work order. Unless the contract is terminated, initiate resumption of work and modify the contract as necessary.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
64	<p>Remedies (Commercial Contracts) Identify contractual remedies. Determine which remedy, if any, applies. Employ the remedy. Potential remedies include (a) rejection of nonconforming deliverables before and after acceptance, (b) rights under a warranty or guarantee clause, (c) rights under warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, and (d) cure or show cause notices.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
65	<p>Remedies (Noncommercial Contracts) Identify contractual remedies. Determine which remedy, if any, applies. Employ the remedy. Potential remedies include (a) liquidated damages, (b) rejection of nonconforming deliverables prior to acceptance, (c) rights under a warranty or guarantee, (d) consideration for acceptance due to fraud, gross mistake, or latent defects, and (e) cure or show cause notices.</p>		

	defects, and (c) cure or show cause notices. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
66	Documenting Past Performance Obtain performance information from the requiring activity and other Government sources. Invite contractor comments. Reconcile discrepancies between the contractor version of events with reported past performance information. Document the file. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
67	Invoices Identify withholdings and deductions. Instruct payment office. <i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i>		

On-The-Job Training Needed?

Unit	Duty	Yes	Plan for training the Duty
68	Assignment of Claims Review requests for assignment of claims. Execute receipt of Notice of Assignment; approve release. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
69	Bond Securities Administer bonds. Obtain new bonds if the surety is disqualified. Provide information on request to the surety. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
70	Administering Financing Terms: Commercial Financing: Monitor securities tendered by the contractor. Review requests for payments against contract terms and conditions. Progress Payments Review requests for progress payments. Monitor liquidation. Where necessary, reduce or suspend payments, adjust liquidation rates, or grant unusual progress payments. Performance-Based Payments: Review request for payments. Substantiate performance. Determine the degree to which the Government is responsible for failure to meet a scheduled event or criterion. Where necessary, reduce or suspend payments, adjust the payment schedule, or demand repayment. <i>Recommend Skill Level 3</i>		
	Unallowable Costs Determine the allowability of invoiced costs. Prepare notice of intent to disallow.		

71	<p>whether to withdraw or sustain the notice and/or allow part of the costs.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
72	<p>Indirect Costs Adjust billing rates as necessary to prevent substantial overpayment or underpayment of indirect costs. Determine applicability of the quick closeout procedure and negotiate final indirect cost rates. Otherwise, obtain final indirect rates from the cognizant agency.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
73	<p>Limitation of Costs If a cost reimbursement contract, determine if the contractor has exceeded 75% of the estimated cost in the Schedule. If a Time & Material or Labor Hour contract, determine if the contractor has exceeded 85% of the ceiling price . Recommend an appropriate option if the contractor will not be able to complete the work within the amount obligated.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

74	<p>Price and Fee Adjustments Where applicable, monitor payments and adjust billing prices. Given the economic price adjustment, incentive or award formula in the contract, establish the final fee or price (or the fee and price for the applicable period)</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
75	<p>Collecting Contractor Debts Determine indebtedness. Identify and obtain repayment (e.g., through set-offs; demand letters). Respond to requests for deferment.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
76	<p>Accounting and Estimating Systems Determine the need to audit a contractor's accounting or estimating system. Negotiate improvements and monitor implementation. Take measures to protect the Government if the accounting or estimating system is deficient.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
77	<p>Cost Accounting Standards Review Disclosure Statements. Notify contractor of noncompliance. Review proposed accounting changes. Negotiate any necessary Cost Impact Adjustments.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
	<p>Defective Pricing Identify and report indicators of defective pricing. Arrange audit of the data. Determine</p>		

78	and the downward adjustment. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
79	Property Administration Establish reporting requirements. Monitor delivery of Government property. Monitor contractor property control systems and use of Government furnished property. Determine liability for damage or misuse and negotiate consideration. Recover or dispose of the property. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
80	Intellectual Property- Monitor compliance with the intellectual property sections of FAR 52.212-4 in contracts for commercial items, or the Clauses in UCF 1 (or equivalent clauses in other contracts) by both the contractor and Government personnel. Identify, investigate and resolve problems with data rights. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		

On-The-Job Training Needed?

Unit	Duty	Yes	Plan for training the Duty
81	Administering Socio-Economic and other Misc. Terms- Enforce compliance with socio-economic contractual requirements by both the contractor and Government personnel. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
82	Claims Research claim and prepare finding of facts. Discuss claim with contractor. Prepare CO's decision. Determine whether ADR applies and participate in ADR. Otherwise, participate in appeals process. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i>		
83	Termination for Convenience (Commercial Contracts) Determine the necessity for termination. Prepare the notice. Negotiate a percentage of the contract price reflecting the percentage of the work performed prior to the notice of termination, plus reasonable charges resulting from the termination. Termination for Convenience (Noncommercial Contracts) Determine the necessity for termination. Prepare the notice. Negotiate settlement of outstanding costs or, where settlement is not possible, prepare a unilateral settlement by determination. On fixed price contracts, determine the equitable adjustment for the remaining portion of the contract. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		

84	<p>Closeout Verify that the contract is physically complete and that other terms and conditions have been satisfied (e.g., return or disposition of Government property; disposition of classified materials). Obtain forms, reports, and clearances. Verify that there are no outstanding claims or disputes. Obtain final invoice. Prepare contract completion statement. Retain files.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
85	<p>Fraud & Exclusion Recognize indicators of fraud and other misconduct. Report such indicators to the IG, debarring officials, and/or other proper authority</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

Appendix I

PLAN FOR TRAINING PURCHASING AGENTS

SKILL LEVELS

1. **KNOWLEDGE.** Ability to describe the duty, – what (i.e., definition and scope), when performed (i.e., circumstances and conditions), and why performed (i.e., purpose and standards for performance).
2. **COMPREHENSION.** Ability to (a) describe the duty and (b) detail how the duty is performed (process/flowchart, tasks, subtasks, critical decisions, decision making criteria and models, software, et. al.).
3. **APPLICATION.** Ability to (a) describe the duty, (b) detail how the duty is performed, and © perform critical aspects of the duty under actual or simulated conditions in a learning environment.
4. **ANALYSIS.** Ability to (a) describe the duty, (b) detail how the duty is performed, and © perform critical aspects of the duty for a selected task or tasks under more complex actual or simulated conditions in a learning environment.

SKILL LEVELS:

The following pages list purchasing agent duty descriptions with recommended skill levels. HCA/HCADs are authorized to revise the skill levels and supplement

duty descriptions as needed for their mission areas. The APPLICATION and ANALYSIS Skill Levels require OJT.

On-The-Job Training Needed?

UNIT	DUTY	YES	PLAN FOR TRAINING THE DUTY
1	Forecasting Requirements/Acquisition Strategy Collect data from requirements managers on future acquisition requirements. Advise the managers on policies and long-range strategies for enhancing competition, minimizing costs, reducing lead-times, etc. Plan and organize to meet the anticipated, aggregate requirements <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
3	Purchase Requests Review the purchase request (PR), obtain additional information and corrections to complete the PR, accept the PR, establish the contract file, and control data on the acquisition. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
4	Funding Determine if sufficient, applicable funds have been committed prior to solicitation <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
	Market Research Review acquisition histories. Collect any market data necessary for (1) analyzing the requirement (2)		

5	<p>determining the extent of competition, (3) planning source selection, (4) selecting terms and conditions for the solicitation, (5) soliciting offers, and (6) evaluating offers.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
6	<p>Requirements Review and critique proposed Requirement Documents (RDs) and SOWs. Determine (1) commerciality (e.g., whether FAR part 12 applies) and (2) whether or not to procure through SAP.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
8	<p>Services Screen PRs for requests to acquire personal services or advisory and assistance services. Determine whether there is sufficient justification, approvals, and legal authority to make such acquisitions. Where applicable, request Wage Determinations for incorporation in the solicitation.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
9	<p>Sources Screen purchase requests against (1) required sources of supply; (2) QBLs, QMLs, and QPLs; and (3) interagency sources. If none apply, develop and maintain an open market source list.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
	<p>SA Competition Requirements Determine whether to solicit from only one source or a limited number of sources</p>		

10	<p>number of sources.</p> <p>Competition Requirements (over SAT) Determine whether to meet the requirement through "other than full and open competition" or after the exclusion of sources.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
10B	<p>Unsolicited Proposals Process unsolicited proposals and determine whether to noncompetitively acquire the offered services</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
11	<p>Small Business Set-Asides Determine whether the procurement will be set-aside in part or in whole for small business concerns. (1.1.3 in part)</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
12	<p>8(a) Procurements Determine whether to obtain the supply or service through SBA under the 8(a) program.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
13	<p>Lease Vs. Purchase- Determine whether to solicit for lease, purchase, or both. Compare offers to sell property to the Government against offers to lease the property to the Government. Determine whether purchase or lease represents the lowest total discounted cost to the Government</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		

15	<p>Non-Price Factors Review Review proposed business management and technical evaluation factors; determine how the factors will be applied in evaluating offers (i.e., as go/no-go or ranking factors). Determine whether to award on "lowest price" or "greatest value."</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
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16	<p>A. Method of Procurement Determine whether to award under FAR Part 13, 14, 15 (without discussions, or 15 (with discussions). (1.1.5)</p> <p>B. Method for Soliciting Quotes If award is to be made under FAR Part 13, determine method for soliciting quotes. (e.g., FACNET, oral, written RFQ, or electronic channels other than FACNET)</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
17	<p>Contract Type (Pricing Arrangement) Identify and solicit the type of contractual pricing arrangement (e.g., FFP, FP-EPA, FPI, FPR, CPFF, CP-AF, CPIF, et. al.) that will best mitigate and apportion expected risks.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
18	<p>Recurring Requirements Determine appropriate method (if any) to solicit for currently unfunded, prospective requirements. Alternatives: Blanket Purchase Agreements, Options, Indefinite Task/Delivery Order contracts, and/or multi year clauses (e.g., FAR 52.217-1).</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
	<p>Procurement Plans - Establish milestones for solicitation, evaluation, and</p>		

23	award tasks. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
24	Publicizing Proposed Procurements - If required, prepare and forward the CBD notice . If required, post RFQs select and employ any other method for publicizing the requirement. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i>		
25	Conduct Oral Solicitations Solicit quotes by phone or fax. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i>		
26	Solicitation Preparation for FAR Part 12 acquisitions: identify, complete and incorporate FAR Part 12 clauses and provisions in the Request For Proposal (RFP), Invitation for Bids (IFB), of Request for Quotations (RFQ). Incorporate other terms and conditions required for the acquisition. Identify customary commercial terms and conditions and determine which to incorporate (if any). Prepare the SF 1449 and addenda (if any) to incorporate customary commercial terms and conditions. Make the solicitation available to interested parties. For other acquisitions, identify and incorporate provisions and clauses that apply to the acquisition. Assemble the RFQ, IFB or RFP. Make the solicitation available to interested parties. <i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i>		
27	Preaward Inquiries Answer sensitive questions about the solicitation. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i>		

28	<p>Prebid/Preproposal Conferences Provide</p> <p>offerors with a public forum to review the site (if any), question the solicitation, and express any concerns about the solicitation.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
29A &29B	<p>Amending Solicitations Determine whether there is a need to amend or cancel the solicitation. If an amendment is necessary, prepare and issue it.</p> <p>Cancelling Solicitations (RFQs/RFPs) Cancel an RFQ/RFP.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
35	<p>Processing Proposals/Quotes Receive and control proposals/quotes. Resolve late offers/quotes. Identify and request the services of technical and other personnel for proposal evaluation.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2</i></p>		
36	<p>Applying Past Performance, Technical and Other Nonwrite Factors Review findings and recommendations of technical personnel on (a) technical acceptability of the offer/quote, (b) technical deficiencies, and © the relative standing of the offers/quotes based on nonwrite factors.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
42	<p>Award Without Discussions - Determine whether to award without discussions; make such awards.</p>		

	<i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i>		
47	<p>Debriefing As requested, debrief vendors.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
48	<p>Responsibility Determine whether the offeror meets the general and any special standards of responsibility.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
50	<p>Prepare Awards (FAR Parts 14 & 15)/Prepare Purchase Orders Re-verify funding. Determine whether to reject offers. Prepare the contract. Select the awardee(s). Prepare FACNET purchase orders (commercial and noncommercial). Prepare written Purchase Orders (commercial and noncommercial).</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
51	<p>Issuing Awards and Related Notices - Execute the contract. Notify the awardee and other parties as required.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
53	<p>Protests Research and prepare positions on protests of the award. Respond to the protests as provided in the procedures for the forum or forums in which the protest has been filed the agency, GAO, SBA (protests re: eligibility for set asides), or the courts. Resolve protests through ADR .</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

58	<p>Contract Modifications- Review proposed modifications against the scope of work and availability of funds. Determine whether to modify the contract and the type of modification to employ. Implement the modification.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
59	<p>Options- Re-verify the reasonableness of an option price, through a formal solicitation of market research. Determine whether to exercise the option. Notify the contractor.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
61	<p>Monitoring, Inspection, and Acceptance (Commercial Contracts) Determine whether acceptance will be based on contractor assurances or inspection by Federal officials. Identify, investigate, document, and resolve potential or actual problems</p> <p>Monitoring, Inspection, and Acceptance (Noncommercial Contracts) Monitor compliance with the Schedule (e.g., UCF 8B-8H) by both the contractor and the Government. Identify, investigate, document, and resolve potential or actual problems.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
62	<p>Delays Determine whether delay is excusable and negotiate consideration when acquiring commercial and non-commercial items. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

64	<p>Remedies (Commercial Contracts) Identify contractual remedies. Determine which remedy, if any, applies. Employ the remedy. Potential remedies include (a) rejection of nonconforming deliverables before and after acceptance, © rights under a warranty or guarantee clause, (d) rights under warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, and (e) cure or show cause notices.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i></p>		
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64	<p>Remedies (Noncommercial Contracts) Identify contractual remedies. Determine which remedy, if any, applies. Employ the remedy. Potential remedies include (a) liquidated damages, (b) rejection of nonconforming deliverables prior to acceptance, © rights under a warranty or guarantee, (d) consideration for acceptance due to fraud, gross mistake, or latent defect, and (e) cure or show cause notices.</p>		
66	<p>Documenting Past Performance- Obtain performance information from the requiring activity and other Government sources. Invite contractor comments. Reconcile discrepancies between the contractor version of events with reported past performance information. Document the file.</p>		

	<i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i>		
83	<p>Termination for Cause (Commercial Contracts) Determine the need and adequacy of the case for termination for cause. Prepare and issue the termination notice as prescribed in FAR Part 12. Considering all remedies available to any buyer in the marketplace, select and apply the appropriate remedy or remedies.</p> <p>Termination For Default (Noncommercial Contracts) Determine the need and adequacy of the case for default. Prepare and issue the termination notice. If bonded, obtain performance or payment from surety. Otherwise, reprocure and demand payment for the excess costs of reprocurement</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		
84	<p>Closeout Verify that the contract is physically complete and that other terms and conditions have been satisfied (e.g., return or disposition of Government property; disposition of classified materials). Obtain forms, reports, and clearances. Verify that there are no outstanding claims or disputes. Obtain final invoice. Prepare contract completion statement. Retain files.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3</i></p>		

Appendix J

PLAN FOR TRAINING CONTRACTING OFFICER REPRESENTATIVES

SKILL LEVELS

1. **KNOWLEDGE.** Ability to describe the duty, – what (i.e., definition and scope), when performed (i.e., circumstances and conditions), and why performed (i.e., purpose and standards for performance).
2. **COMPREHENSION.** Ability to (a) describe the duty and (b) detail how the duty is performed (process/flowchart, tasks, subtasks, critical decisions, decision making criteria and models, software, et. al.).
3. **APPLICATION.** Ability to (a) describe the duty, (b) detail how the duty is performed, and (c) perform critical aspects of the duty under actual or simulated conditions in a learning environment.
4. **ANALYSIS.** Ability to (a) describe the duty, (b) detail how the duty is performed, and (c) perform critical aspects of the duty for a selected task or tasks under more complex actual or simulated conditions in a learning environment.

SKILL LEVELS:

The following pages list Contracting Officer Representative duty descriptions with recommended skill levels. HCA/HCADs are authorized to revise the skill levels and supplement duty descriptions as needed for their missions areas. The APPLICATION and ANALYSIS skill levels require OJT.

Initiating/Evaluating a Requirement

				On-the-Job Training Needed?	Classroom Training of Duty
Unit	Duty	No	Yes	Course Title/Month/Year/Name of Training Facility/No. of Course Hours	
2A	Purchase Requests Review the purchase request (PR), obtain additional information and corrections to complete the PR, accept the PR, establish the contract file, and control data on the acquisition. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i>				
2B	Property Establish reporting requirements. Monitor delivery of Government property. Monitor contractor property control systems and use of Government furnished property. Determine liability for damage or misuse and negotiate consideration. Recover or dispose of the property. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i>				
2C	Requirements Review and critique proposed Requirement Documents (RDs) and SOWs. Determine (1) commerciality (e.g., whether FAR part 12 applies) and (2) whether or not to procure through SAP. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i>				

Initiating Work Under The Contract

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		Job Training Needed?		Duty
Unit	Duty	No	Yes	Course Title/Month/Year/Name of Training Facility/No. of Course Hours
3	Develop A COR Workplan. Review the contract and related acquisition histories. Flag milestones related to assigned tasks. Prepare a workplan. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i>			
4	Post-Award Orientations Assist contracting officers in orienting contractors. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i>			

Quality Assurance

		On-the-Job Training Needed?		Classroom Training of Duty
Unit	Duty	No	Yes	Course Title/Month/Year/Name of Training Facility/No. of Course Hours
5A	Monitor- Monitor compliance with the Schedule (e.g., UCF N-H). Identify and report potential non-compliance with other business terms and conditions, such as with clauses on environmental protections, the Privacy Act, drug-free workplace requirements, and security requirements. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i>			
5B	Monitor Costs- Review estimates of cost and time to complete. Select and recommend the best available alternative if the contractor will not be able to complete the work within the amount obligated. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3-4</i>			
6	Property Administration. Inspect property prior to furnishing it. Arrange for delivery to the contractor. Monitor the contractor's use of the Government furnished property. Identify and report damage or misuse. Advise contracting officers on recovery or disposal.			

	<i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i>			
7	<p>Inspection and Acceptance deliverables and prepare receiving reports, within delegated limits.</p> <p>*Verification/Audit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - testing in accordance with clause - evaluate deliverables against contract requirement using - predetermined surveillance methods - prepare and forward finding to CO <p>* Acceptance: report to include other documents</p> <p>* Rejection: contractor discrepancies</p> <p>* Reperformance</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i></p>			
8	<p>Contract Modifications- Document and resolve potential and actual problems. Identify, document, and report potential or actual problems (including reports on constructive changes).</p> <p>Determine the need to modify contracts; prepare purchase requests for modifications, including revised terms for the Schedule.</p> <p>Prepare technical evaluations (e.g., of the labor, hours, materials, etc., incurred or proposed for the modification) of the contractor's proposal for the equitable adjustment; assist contracting officers with technical issues in negotiating modifications.</p> <p>Recommend whether to exercise an option and obtain the necessary commitment of funds.</p> <p><i>Recommended Level 2-4</i></p>			
9	<p>Delays Determine whether delay is excusable and negotiate consideration when acquiring commercial and non-commercial items.</p> <p><i>Recommended Skill Level 3-4</i></p>			

10	<p>Stop Work Determine whether to stop work; prepare and issue the stop work order. Unless the contract is terminated, initiate resumption of work and modify the contract as necessary.</p> <p><i>Recommended skill Level 3-4</i></p>			
	<p>Claims Research claim and prepare finding of facts. Discuss claim with contractor. Prepare</p>			

11	and participate in ADR. Otherwise, participate in appeals process. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i>			
12	Remedies (Commercial Contracts) Identify contractual remedies. Determine which remedy, if any, applies. Employ the remedy. Potential remedies include (a) rejection of nonconforming deliverables before and after acceptance, (c) rights under a warranty or guarantee clause, (d) rights under warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, and (e) cure or show cause notices. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3-4</i>			
13	Termination- Assist contracting officers in preparing the case for default and implementing default termination. When in the Government's interest, recommend and justify termination for convenience. Assist contracting officers with technical issues in negotiating settlements. <i>Recommended Skill Level 2-4</i>			

Payment

				On-the-Job Training Needed?	Classroom Training of Duty
Unit	Duty	No	Yes		Course Title/Month/Year/Name of Training Facility/No. of Course Hours
Payment- Verify contractor representation of deliverables received and accepted or programs made or, prior to issuance of payments against invoices. <i>Recommended Skill Level 4</i>					

Closeout

				On-the-Job	Classroom Training of Duty

				Training Needed?	
Unit	Duty	No	Yes	Course Title/Month/Year/Name of Training Facility/No. of Course Hours	
Closeouts- Determine whether the contract is physically complete and whether other terms and conditions have been satisfied (e.g., return or disposition of Government Property; disposition of classified materials). Complete any related forms, reports, and clearances. <i>Recommended Skill Level 3-4</i>					

APPENDIX K-1

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Name:

Organization:

Date:

Course	Date Schedule	Date Completed	Units Covered By The Course	Selected For OJT?	Date C Schedu
Acquisition Planning I (CON 101			0 Contracting Orientation		
Fundamentals of			1 Forecasting Requirements		

Contracting-Part I)			3 Purchase Requests		
			4 Funding		
			5 Market Research (Part A - Market Investigation)		
			6 Requirements Documents (when acquiring commercial items)		
			8 Services (SCA Determinations)		
			9 Sources		
			10 Competition Requirements		
			11 Set-Aside		
			12 8(a) Procurement		
			13 Lease VS. Purchase		
			15 Non-Price Factors (when Acquiring commercial items)		
			16 Method of Procurement		
			17 Contract Types (when acquiring commercial items)		

			18 Recurring Requirements (for commercial items)		
			23 Procurement Plans		
Contract Formation I (CON 101 Fundamentals of Contracting - Part 2)			24 Publicizing Proposed Procurements		
			25 Conduct Oral Solicitations		
			26 RFQs/RFPs (for commercial items)		
			27 Preaward Inquiries		
			28 Prequote/Preproposal Conferences		
			29 Amending/Canceling Solicitations		
			35 Processing Quotes & Proposals		
			36 Applying Past Performance, Technical, & Other Non-Price Factors (when acquiring commercial items)		
			42 Award Without Discussions		
			44 Extent of Discussions (Simplified Acquisitions)		
			47 Debriefing		

			48 Responsibility		
			50 Preparing Awards (when acquiring commercial items)		
			51 Issuing Awards & Related Notices		
			53 Protests		
Contract Administration I (CON 101 Fundamentals of Contracting-Part 3)			58 Contract Modifications (under FAR 52.212-4)		
			59 Options		
			61 Monitoring, Inspection/Acceptance (per FAR 52.212-4)		
			62 Delays (per FAR 52.212-4)		
			64 Remedies		
			66 Documenting Past Performance		
			83 Termination for Cause & Convenience (FAR 52.212-4)		
			84 Closeout		
			14 Price Related Factors		

Price Analysis I (CON 104 Fundamentals of Contract Pricing, Part I)			37 Price Analysis		
Cost Analysis (CON 104 Fundamentals of Contract Pricing, Part 2)			38 Pricing Information From Offerors		
			39 Audits		
			40 Cost Analysis		
Federal Contract Negotiation Techniques (CON 104 Fundamentals of Contract Pricing, Part 3)			43 Communications/Fact-finding		
			44 Negotiation Strategy		
			45 Extent of Discussions (Competitive Range)		
Acquisition Planning II (CON 202 Intermediate Contracting, Part I)			2 Acquisition Planning		
			5 Market Research (Part B - Exchanges prior to soliciting)		
			6 Requirements Documents (when acquiring noncommercial items)		
			7 Use of Government Property		
			8 Services (Authorities)		

			15 Non-Price Factors (when acquiring noncommercial items)		
			17 Contract Types (when acquiring noncommercial items)		
			18 Recurring Requirements (for noncommercial items)		
			19 Unpriced Contracts		
			21 Need for Bonds		
			18 Recurring Requirements (for commercial items)		
			22 Method of Payment		
Contract Formation II (CON 202 Intermediate Contracting Part 2)			26 RFPs (for noncommercial items)		
			36 Apply Past Performance, Technical & Other Non-Price Factors (when acquiring non-commercial items)		
			41 Evaluating Other Terms & Conditions		
			44 Competitive Range Determinations		
			50 Preparing Awards (when acquiring non commercial items)		
			51 Mistakes in Offers		

Contract Administration II (CON 202 Intermediate Contracting, Part 3)			54 Contract Administration Planning		
			55 Post-Award Orientations		
			56 Consent to Subcontracts		
			57 Subcontracting Requirements		
			58 Contract Modifications (contracts for noncommercial items)		
			61 Monitoring, Inspection, & Acceptance (contracts for noncommercial items)		
			62 Delays (contracts for noncommercial items)		
			63 Stop Work		
			65 Remedies (contracts for noncommercial items)		
			67 Invoices		
			68 Assignment of Claims		
			75 Collecting Contractor Debts		
			79 Property Administration		

			80 Intellectual Property		
			81 Administering Socio-Economic & Misc. Terms		
			82 Claims		
			83 Termination for Cause & Convenience (FAR 52.212-4)		
			85 Fraud & Exclusion		
Intermediate Contract Pricing (CON 204 Intermediate Contract Pricing)			40 Cost Analysis (indirect costs, quantitative techniques & contract types)		
			58 Contract Modifications (equitable adjustments)		
			71 Unallowable Costs		
			72 Indirect Costs		
			73 Limitation of Costs		
			74 Price & Fee Adjustments		
			76 Accounting & Estimating Systems		
			77 Cost Accounting Standards		

			78 Defective Pricing		
Task & Delivery Order Contracting			60 Task & Delivery Order Contracting		
Contract Financing			20.1 Commercial Financing		
			20.2 Noncommercial Contract Financing		
			70 Administering Financing Terms		
Sealed Bidding			26 Solicitation Preparation		
			30 Processing Bids		
			31 Bid Acceptance Periods		
			32 Late Bids		
			33 Price Analysis (Sealed Bidding)		
			34 Responsiveness		
Construction Contracting			Skill at applying policies unique to construction contracting		
A & E Contracting			Skill at applying policies unique to A&E Services		

Information Technology Contracting			Skill at applying policies unique to Information Technology		
--	--	--	---	--	--

Supervisor's Signature: _____ Title: _____
 Date: _____

Employee's Signature: _____ Title: _____
 Date: _____

APPENDIX K-2

Contracting Officer Representative and Contracting Officer Technical Representative Training Plan

Training Skills	Formal Training Scheduled Date/Course Title	Formal Training Completion Date	Training Skill Selected for OJT? (√)	Date OJT Scheduled	Date OJT Completed
OR Level I					
Training Units					

Basic COR Course					
COR Level I I					
Training Units					
Prepare Purchase Request Package					
Requirements					
Develop a COR Work plan					
Post-Award Orientations					
Monitor					
Monitor Costs					
COR Level I I I					
Training Unit					
Property					
Property Administration					
Inspection and Acceptance					
Contract Modifications					

Delays					
Stop Work					
Claims					
Remedies					
Termination					
Approved by:	Title:	Date	Signature:		

Appendix L-1

GS-1102, GS-1105, and CONTRACTING OFFICER

QUALIFICATION STATEMENT

Use a format similar to this with the following information:

Last/Middle/ First Name:

Title, Series, Grade:

Agency/Office/Organizational Identification Number (four digit code):

Office Address:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

E-Mail Address:

Experience: (Begin with your current position and work back until you have demonstrated the required relevant work experience).
Information on each position should include:

Name of Employer

Dates Employed

Title of Position

Kind of Business/Organization

Description of Work

Percent of Time Spent on Contract Duties

Current Acquisition Career Specialties (e.g., Policy, IT, Construction, A/E, General , SAP)

Are you a warranted Contracting Officer? No ----- Yes----- If yes, provide Warrant Level----- AND

Approval Date on your for your first USDA Contracting Officer warrant: -----

Education:

(Highest Level Completed):

Name of High School/College/University

Dates Attended

Diploma Received

Years Completed

No. of Semester/Quarter Hour Credits Completed

Type and Year of Degree

Major Field of Study

Other relevant special qualifications, certifications (e.g., CPCM, CACM, SAS, etc.)

I have at least 24 Semester Hours in a combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organizational and management. Yes ---- No --
-- (You must provide a list of courses and the number of semester hours for each course if you do not have a Bachelors or Masters Degree in one of the previously listed fields)

Procurement Related Training: (If applicable, attach a copy of your IDP including the following information)

Name of Course

Dates Attended

Training Mode (e.g., tests, classroom, waiver, etc.)

Name of School/Vendor

Number of Training Hours Per Course

Appendix L-2

CONTRACTING OFFICER REPRESENTATIVE QUALIFICATION STATEMENT

Use a format similar to this with the following information:

Last/Middle/ First Name:

Title, Series, Grade:

Agency/Office/Organizational Identification Number (four digit code):

Office Address:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

E-Mail Address:

COR Experience:

Information on each position should include:(Begin with your current position and work back until you have demonstrated the required relevant work experience).

Name of Employer

Dates Employed

Title of Position

Description of Work

Percent of Time Spent on COR Duties

Type of Acquisition Project (e.g., Policy, IT, Construction, A/E, General , SAP)

Education::

High School: Yes— No—

College: Yes— No — Graduated Yes — No ---

Graduate School Yes --- No — Graduated Yes — No ---

Major Field of Study:-----

Procurement Related Training:

Name of Course

Dates Attended

Training Mode (e.g., tests, classroom, waiver, etc.)

Name of School/Vendor

Number of Training Hours Per Course

Appendix M

FORMAT FOR CONTRACTING OFFICER WARRANT REQUESTS

1. There is a clear and convincing need to appoint a contracting officer at Level _____ for the following reasons:

2. The Contracting Officer candidate is:

(Name, Title, Series and Grade)

3. Contracting officer's candidate's work location:

(Office/Branch/Division/City/State)

4. The candidate meets established qualification standards.

5. The candidate's current conflict of interest disclosure statement, if required, is on file in the appropriate personnel office.

6. A copy of the candidate's qualification statement is attached. (Not required if there are no changes from a qualification statement previously submitted pursuant to this handbook)

7. In addition to Procurement Laws, Regulations, and other applicable requirements, the following warrant limitations are requested:

Dollar Thresholds:

- a. General Contracts: _____
- b. IT Resources: _____
- c. Construction, A/E: _____
- d. Delivery Orders: _____
- e. Other Limitations: _____

I hereby certify that the above information, including any attachment, is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Nominating Officer:

(Signature)

(Typed Name, Title, and Agency) (Date)

For Appointing Official Approval Use Only:

Warrant Issue Date _____ Warrant No. _____ Warrant Signed by: _____

